woman&home

Feel Good Food

AUTUMN 2010 £3.99

101 best-ever recipes & ideas

Bake it now!
No butter, no cream, so divine chocolate cake

TOP TV CHEFS

So many cooks!
Jamie Oliver
Rick Stein
Rachel Allen
Gordon Ramsay
Antonio Carluccio
Valentine Warner
Bill Granger

Yes, it works!

EASY DETOX
Flat tum, more energy in just 10 days

DINING IN
✢ Glam food for friends
✢ Irresistible desserts

New comfort food

HEALTHY, SIMPLE, SEASONAL AND DELICIOUS!

✢ After-work suppers ✢ Meals to make and freeze
✢ Fabulous bakes and cakes ✢ Great veggie recipes

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TESCO

Hello

Welcome back to our autumn edition of Feel Good Food. It's as jam-packed as ever with *inspirational recipes, ideas and healthy-eating tips* and info, plus *we've enlisted some of your favourite chefs to get you cooking.* Check out Jamie's fantastic Pumpkin tart (p112) – we all loved it!

As we get to the end of the summer, *cooks start to get back into the kitchen for some "serious" cooking.* In my case, I spend most of the summer cooking outside on the barbecue, put together a quick salad and eat a big bowl of berries and summer fruits for dessert. Oh, the joy of such little washing-up! But, *as we head into autumn, I start to think of warming stews and soups, slow seasonal food,* and all those lovely autumnal fruits for delicious puds.

It's all here, together with some wonderful table ideas from the w&h homes team, and *a wide range of online suppliers to find top-quality food at the click of a mouse.* And if you're new to Feel Good Food, why not subscribe with our great offer on page 130?

Happy cooking and enjoy the eating!

Jane Curran,
Food Editor, woman&home

FEEL GOOD+

LOOK OUT...
for our symbols, which will give you useful information at a glance:

+ GREAT FOR VEGGIES
Recipes that are suitable for vegetarians

PLUS recipes that are:
- **EASY**
- **PREPARE AHEAD**
- **FREEZABLE**

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Meet our professionals...

Valentine Warner

Brought up on a farm in Dorset, Valentine's recipes reflect the changing seasons and celebrate the glorious produce available in them.

Valentine worked in numerous London kitchens before setting up his own catering company, which secured clients such as Gucci. He then co-launched Taqueria cafe in London. His latest book, *What To Eat Now*, is full of delectable dishes.

Antonio Carluccio

Regarded as the godfather of Italian cooking, Antonio believes it's important to be loyal to the ingredients and cooking of his country.

After moving to London in 1975, Antonio took over the Neal Street Restaurant in Covent Garden in 1981, and the first Carluccio's café opened in 1998. *Simple Cooking* is his latest book, which advocates cooking with fresh food.

Gordon Ramsay

Part restaurant empire-builder, part celebrity and part über-talented chef, Gordon has become a global star.

Gordon first hit our radar as part-owner of Aubergine, where he won two Michelin stars. He left to start up Restaurant Gordon Ramsay, and Gordon Ramsay Holdings now has restaurants worldwide. His latest book is *Gordon Ramsay's Great Escape: 100 Of My Favourite Indian Recipes*.

Jamie Oliver

It was while working for Rose Gray and Ruth Rogers at London's River Café that Jamie was "discovered".

He's now a national icon, revered for his school dinners campaign and admired for his Fifteen restaurants, where underprivileged youngsters are hired and mades into chefs. His latest book, *Jamie Does...*, has recipes inspired by his travels through Spain, Italy, Sweden, Morocco, Greece and France.

Rick Stein

Rick Stein OBE is passionate about cooking and serving fish, and a firm supporter of local producers.

There's not much the chef and restaurateur doesn't know about fish, and he has inspired many of us to be more adventurous when cooking with seafood. Rick's recent book, *Far Eastern Odyssey*, follows his journey from Cambodia to Bangladesh as he samples and cooks local recipes.

Bill Granger

Bill Granger has always loved food. One of Australia's leading food writers and restaurateurs, he has a simple approach to cooking.

Bill is a self-taught cook who, by the age of 22, had opened his first restaurant in Sydney, called bills. He now has three Sydney restaurants, and his cookbooks – which offer great recipe ideas for meals to enjoy with friends and family – have all been bestsellers.

Rachel Allen

Irish TV chef, author and teacher at The Ballymaloe Cookery School, from which she graduated, Rachel Allen's style is about simple, tasty food to share with friends.

Described by the BBC as the "Irish cooking queen," Rachel has become a household name thanks to her popular TV series and cookery books, including the bestselling *Rachel's Favourite Food At Home*.

Know-how?

- More and more people are now buying books online. Amazon.co.uk is the most popular site, and it can re-direct you to second-hand book sites for out-of-print cookery books. Delivery charges vary so, as well as the publishers' own websites, look at:
- waterstones.com – it often has free-delivery offers on all orders.
- whsmith.co.uk – free delivery over £15.

CLICK ONLINE

For more inspiration and tips, check out womanandhome.com.

Contents

FOOD KNOW-HOW

10 What's in season?
38 Eat smart: Gluten free
62 Eat smart: Eggs
78 Eat smart: Tinned fish
114 Eat smart: Apples
128 Cook smart: Preserving

CHEFS' RECIPES

16 Valentine Warner's Leeks vinaigrette
36 Bill Granger's Pork steaks with cashew nut salsa
58 Antonio Carluccio's Umbrian lentil and home-made sausage stew
76 Rick Stein's Fresh spring rolls (Nem cuon)
100 Rachel Allen's Roast leg of lamb with garlic, rosemary and olive paste
112 Jamie Oliver's Pumpkin tart
126 Gordon Ramsay's Wholemeal blueberry muffins

EASY EVERYDAY

20 Seared tuna with chunky avocado salsa
20 Linguine with peas, courgettes and feta
23 Fruity stuffed peppers
23 Spicy chilli con carne
26 Fast ratatouille pasta
26 Roast Parma monkfish with mushy peas
26 Linguine with roasted aubergines, sun-dried tomatoes and pine nuts
29 Steamed cod with sweet potato mash
29 Spicy red pepper, tomato and rocket pizza
32 Steamed pak choi and ginger-wrapped salmon
32 Creamy chicken with red pesto and olives
32 Seafood, saffron and chorizo risotto
35 Med-style chicken
35 Cheese and bacon omelette

COMFORT FOOD

44 Wild mushroom risotto
44 Pot-roast chicken with creamy tarragon sauce
47 Healthier fish pie
47 Rösti-topped spicy cottage pie
47 Rich beef casserole with porcini and port
50 Feta and hummus soup
50 Lamb shanks with roasted vine tomatoes
53 Sausage casserole
53 Hearty vegetable soup
56 Beef and bean stew
56 Fruity lamb stew
56 Pumpkin and tomato chowder

AROUND THE WORLD

66 Squid and ginger stir-fry
66 Keralan green chicken curry
69 Real Italian carbonara
69 Roast vegetable lasagne
70 French onion soup
70 Berber tagine
73 Super-quick chicken tikka
73 Patty pan squash and prawn curry
74 Quesadillas with spring onions and jalapeños
74 Vegetarian chilli

SOMETHING FOR THE WEEKEND

82 Roast quail with pomegranate, mint and parsley yogurt
82 Herb-roasted chicken with corn salsa
86 Leg of pork with sloe gin and apples
86 Roast duck made oh so easy
89 Rosemary chicken with lentil and spinach salad
89 Spiced roasted aubergine
90 Cheat's kedgeree

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90 Thyme-roasted partridges with pears
92 Country bread salad
93 Pear salad
93 Roasted squash with feta
94 Mediterranean fish stew with rouille croutons
94 Oven-steamed halibut
94 Balsamic-glazed rack of lamb with sweet potato gratin
99 Sweet pork fillet with rösti

DESSERTS

104 Pears poached in dessert wine
104 Spiced apple pie with quince jelly
107 Raspberry tiramisu
107 Crunchy berry crumble
108 Chocolate fondants
111 Rice pudding with blackberries and plums
111 Our classic lemon tart
111 Roasted port plums

BAKING

118 Sticky toffee cakes with salted caramel buttercream
118 Pear and almond cakes with vanilla frosting
118 Mini carrot cakes with lemon frosting
122 Pear and almond cake with sweetened yogurt
122 Chocolate yogurt cake with mascarpone frosting
125 Plum and apple ring cake

THE NEW DETOX

135 Prawn and vegetable stir-fry
136 Cream Wörthersee spread
136 Mint and feta salad
136 Nourishing carrot soup
138 Revitalising and immune-boosting soup
138 Mixed vegetable quinoa

OTHERS

5 Our contributors
8 Menu planner
60 Log on to womanandhome.com
130 Subscribe to Feel Good Food
140 Subscribe to woman&home
142 Table ideas
146 Online suppliers
150 woman&home offers
154 Recipe index

Practical stuff

- We use measuring spoons and all quantities are level.
- All eggs are free-range.
- Use metric or imperial weights and measures; don't mix the two.
- We don't specify salt and pepper in our ingredients' list, but we always tell you to season food. The use, or not, of salt is up to you.
- Each recipe is nutritionally analysed. The Recommended Daily Amount (RDA) is 2,000 calories for women and 2,500 for men. The RDA for fat is 70g for women (no more than 20g saturated) and 95g for men (no more than 30g saturated).
- Ovens vary in temperature, so you may want to invest in an oven thermometer.
- The size of a cake is measured on the diameter on the base of the tin.
- Cakes are better if you bake them on non-fan.
- We always use humanely reared meat, poultry and game in our recipes.

Go online

For even more fabulous recipe ideas, visit our fantastic website. **Log on to www.womanandhome.com**

PHOTOGRAPHS RICHARD JUNG **PROP STYLING** SUE ROWLANDS

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A dish for every occasion

Whether you need a new idea for a show-off menu, a bit of a change for Sunday lunch or help to re-invent mid-week meals, look no further!

3 special menus

We've done all the hard work for you, making dinner-party planning so much easier – simply choose one of our three fabulous menu ideas:

+ Roast tomatoes with garlic and anchovies
+ Pork steaks with cashew nut salsa
+ Raspberry tiramisu

+ French onion soup
+ Roast Parma monkfish with mushy peas
+ Our classic lemon tart (right)

+ Fruity stuffed peppers
+ Lamb shanks with roasted vine tomatoes
+ Chocolate fondants

2-course Sunday lunch

+ Balsamic-glazed rack of lamb with sweet potato gratin (left)
+ Spiced apple pie with quince jelly

+ Pot-roast chicken with creamy tarragon sauce
+ Rice pudding with blackberries and plums

+ Rich beef casserole with porcini and port
+ Crunchy berry crumble

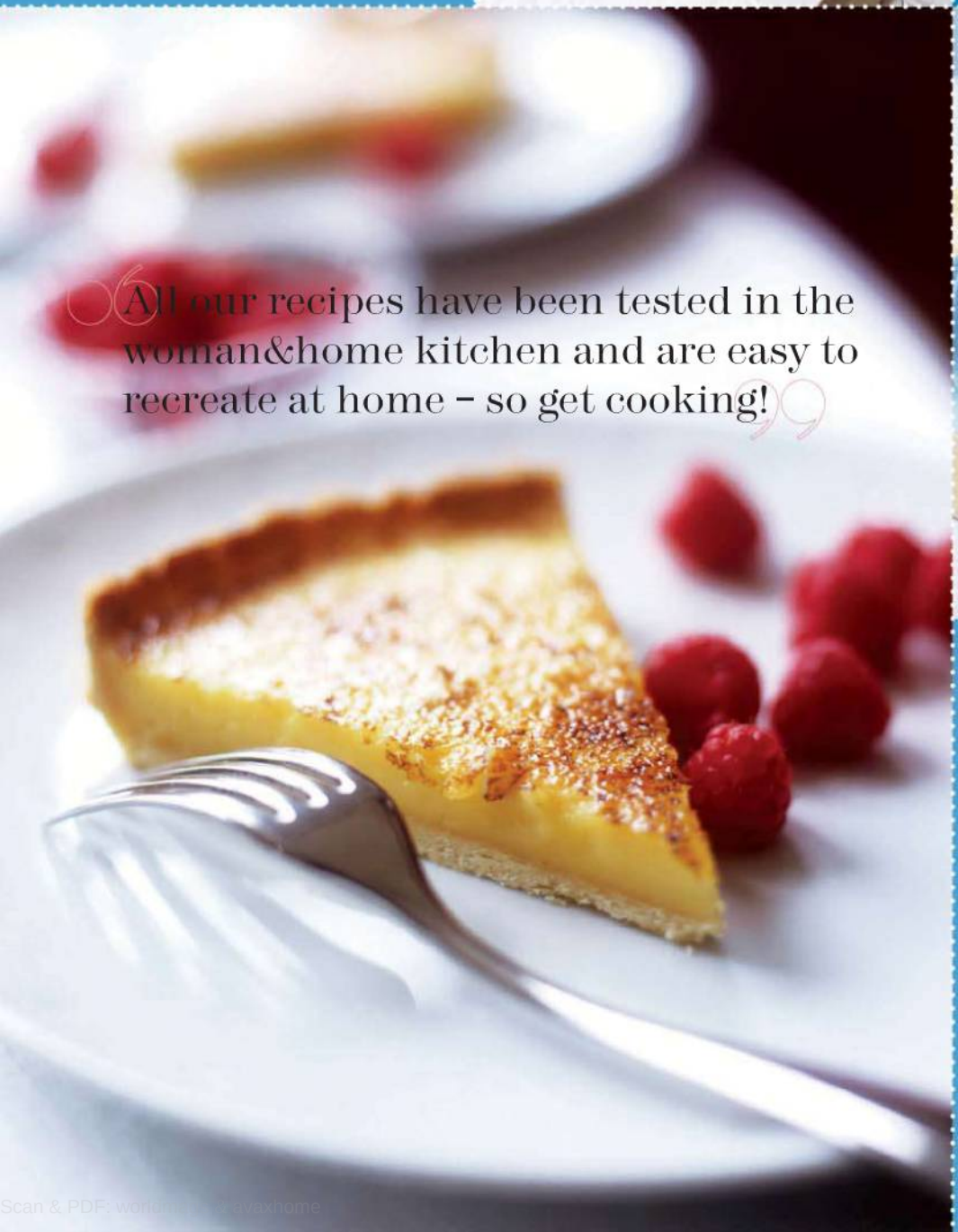
+ Roast vegetable lasagne
+ Pears poached in dessert wine

Something sweet to freeze

- Mini carrot cakes with lemon frosting
- Chocolate yogurt cake with mascarpone frosting (left)
- Sticky toffee cakes with salted caramel buttercream
- Pumpkin tart
- Plum and apple ring cakes
- Pear and almond cake with sweetened yogurt
- Wholemeal blueberry muffins

Supper in under 30 minutes

- Linguine with peas, courgette and feta (left)
- Fast ratatouille pasta
- Steamed pak choi and ginger-wrapped salmon
- Cheese and bacon omelette
- Quesadillas with spring onions and jalapeños
- Feta and hummus soup
- Cheat's kedgeree



"All our recipes have been tested in the woman&home kitchen and are easy to recreate at home – so get cooking!"

TV dinners for Friday night

- Spicy chilli con carne
- Spicy red pepper, tomato and rocket pizza
- Wild mushroom risotto
- Keralan green chicken curry
- Super-quick chicken tikka (above)
- Fresh spring rolls
- Med-style chicken
- Patty pan squash and prawn curry

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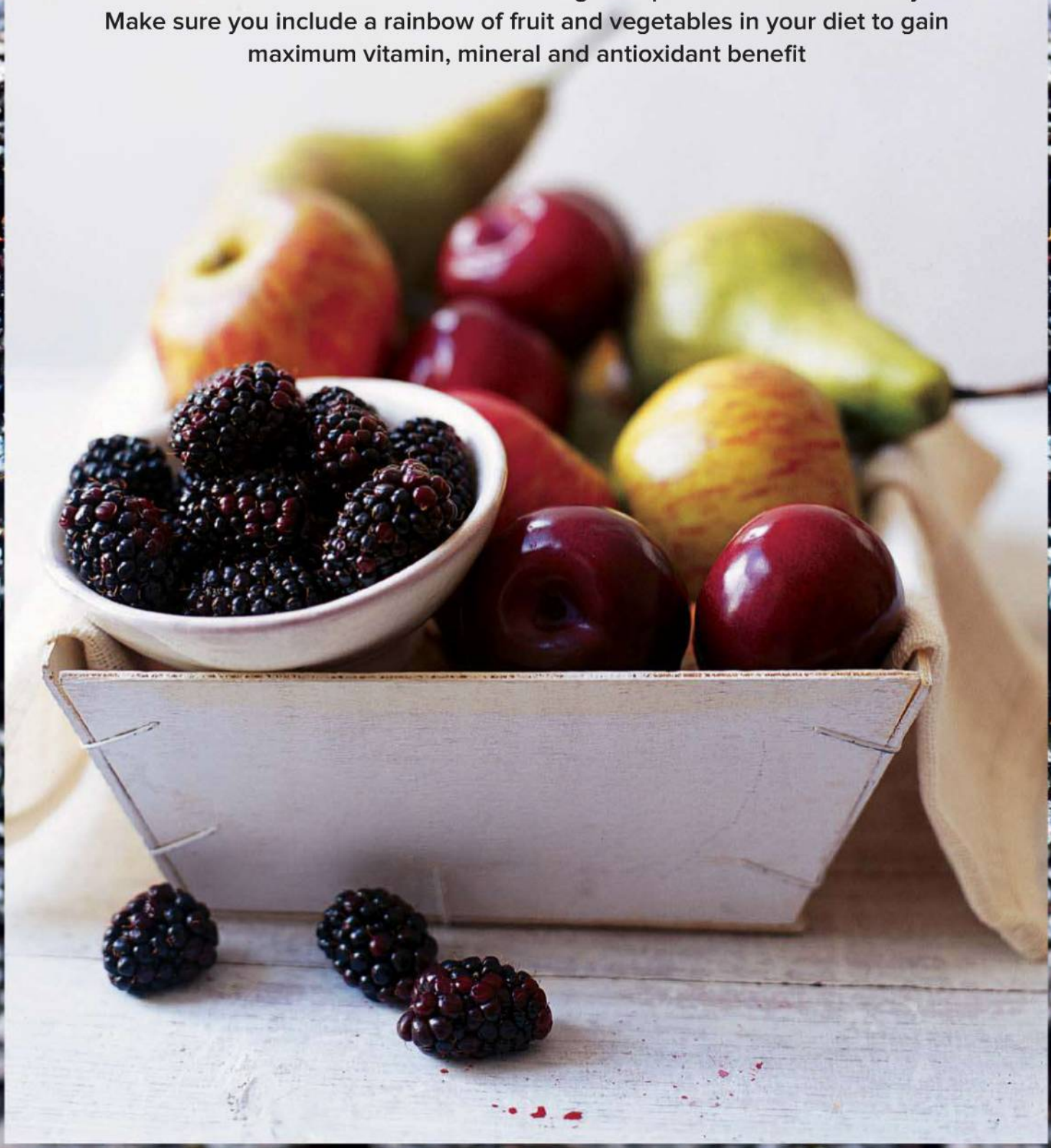
What's in season?

You'll find an abundance of fantastic home-grown produce at this time of year. Make sure you include a rainbow of fruit and vegetables in your diet to gain maximum vitamin, mineral and antioxidant benefit



Fruit

Avoid bruised fruit and veg – they should be firm and look fresh, but there's nothing wrong with odd shapes at all!

✢ APPLES

September sees the glut of English apples in all varieties, from russets to every shade of red and green. Flavours vary too, from crisp and acidic to sweeter and softer. Farmers' markets are the best places to try and buy. Eating apples can be used in cooking where you don't want the fluffiness of a Bramley and want the apple to keep its shape.

✢ BLACKBERRIES

Cultivated blackberries last longer than wild ones, so it's worth buying extra for the freezer while we get the last UK ones. They're great in ice cream, crumbles and cobblers.

✢ BLACKCURRANTS

Again, make the most of the last blackcurrants – they freeze brilliantly. Blackcurrants make the best sorbet you've ever eaten, and their sweetness means you can, unlike redcurrants, add them to a fruit salad or cook them lightly to serve with Greek yogurt.

✢ DAMSONS

You'll find them in good supermarkets and farmers' markets. Although they're small and fiddly with their stone, damsons are a seasonal joy. Use for the best jam and chutney, or in a cobbler. Damsons also make terrific gin in place of sloes.

✢ GOOSEBERRIES

Gooseberries make a wonderful crumble, and they go well in a sorbet combined with elderflower cordial. They go into a classic cobbler, and the French make a sourish compote to serve with mackerel – the sharp fruit cuts through the oiliness of the fish.

✢ GREENGAGES

We grow very few greengages in this country, though their popularity is increasing. Often used to make a delicious jam, they're fab in a tart with an almond frangipane, and used in cakes where you would use plums.

✢ PEARS

The first English pears begin to appear in September. Let them ripen at room temperature for a few days or store in the fridge until you want to eat them. Conference is the most popular English pear, with its delicious, crunchy texture.

✢ PLUMS

It's at this time of year when plums are really plentiful and gardeners have to whip them off the trees before the pigeons and wasps move in. Make the most of them while you can, eaten just as a fruit, poached or baked, or cooked in crumbles, pies and cobblers.

✢ RASPBERRIES

Raspberries are so well-suited to our climate that the season is quite long. It's a shame to cook with raspberries, except to use them in sorbets, a jelly or ice cream, where they seem to retain their flavour. But just on their own with a dollop of yogurt? Perfection.

✢ RHUBARB – OUTDOOR

Much stringier than its classy indoor-grown Yorkshire cousin that we see in February, outdoor rhubarb makes a really good partner with strawberries in a classic crumble.

✢ STRAWBERRIES

The UK strawberry season has really been extended with new growing conditions and different varieties. Make the most of them while they're here, they really don't freeze well. Always serve strawberries at room temperature.

Vegetables

Once again, these should be firm as opposed to bendy and tired.

✢ BEANS – RUNNER AND BROAD

It's the end of the season for our beans. It's best to keep it simple and steam them to retain nutrients. Then toss them in a little butter or olive oil and freshly ground black pepper.

✢ BEETROOT

We love super-trendy, super-healthy beetroot. It's not difficult to cook your own, either by boiling or roasting until tender. It's even easier to buy it vacuum-packed but without vinegar. Beetroot makes a wonderful soup, salad or warm vegetable when grated.

✢ BROCCOLI

Some love broccoli al dente, while others love it cooked until soft. It has an affinity with salty, sharp flavours so you could drizzle over anchovies mixed with olive oil or serve it with feta cheese.

✢ CARROTS

You'll see UK-grown Chantenay carrots, which are the little fat ones that have a sweet flavour. Use carrots for soups, or serve with chopped fresh dill, parsley or chives. Add lemon juice, olive oil and plenty of freshly ground black pepper.

✢ CAVOLO NERO

The uber-trendy "black cabbage" has a great flavour, so gives us an excuse to eat more. It's fab when shredded into minestrone-style soups, wilted into potatoes or gently steamed as a side dish.

✢ COURGETTES

Buy courgettes as small as you can. They should feel firm to the touch. Don't boil them as they're too watery – instead, steam, grill or roast. They're great chopped up into risotto, pasta sauces or on their own with some Parmesan.

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✢ FENNEL
One of our favourites. As well as raw, you can steam fennel, roast it, stir-fry or braise it. Just trim off the ends of the stalk and the top leaves. It's better when cut in half or thirds, as it can be quite chunky and takes a while to cook.

✢ KALE
A good source of calcium, B vitamins and antioxidants, kale is best steamed then served with butter or olive oil, a squeeze of lemon juice and some freshly ground black pepper.

✢ LEEKS
Leeks seem to be less gritty than they used to, though as autumn comes in with more wet weather, wash them more carefully. They're good for roasting or steaming, or chopping and gently cooking in a little olive oil. And they're great with cheese sauce for a classic dish.

✢ LETTUCE
You can find Iceberg, Lamb's and Romaine at this time of year. Crunchy Iceberg is lovely with a creamy dressing. Lamb's lettuce is fragile and needs a delicate dressing, and Romaine is perfect for Caesar salad.

✢ MUSHROOMS – CRIMINI
Again a September mushroom, criminis are small, brown mushrooms with good flavour. They're delicious sautéed in olive oil and garlic, then spooned onto hot wholemeal toast. If you spread Marmite on the toast first, even better!

✢ POTATOES – MAIN CROP
Planted around April, you'll find the main crop potatoes around from now and through the winter. Examples are Arran Victory, Cara, Desiree, Golden Wonder, Kerr's Pink and King Edward. They're generally a multi-purpose potato and only unsuitable as a salad potato.

✢ SALAD OR SPRING ONIONS
So versatile – fantastic in stir-fries and salads, thrown into Oriental soups and curries, and added to fritters, guacamole or a spicy salsa.

✢ SPINACH
Though not as rich in iron as once thought, spinach is still a good source of vitamin B and antioxidants. To really wash spinach well, place in a bowl of cold water and swish it around. Allow any soil and grit to sink to the bottom, then scoop the spinach off the top.

✢ SWEETCORN
A late summer/autumn vegetable, it needs to be eaten as soon as possible after picking. Slowly simmer in water or milk and water, then barbecue whole. Alternatively, cut off the kernels with a sharp knife and use for soups, salads, risotto and fritters.

✢ TOMATOES
At last we can find really flavoursome home-grown tomatoes – from early summer into autumn. From baby plum to big beef tomatoes, always use them at room temperature, as the fridge will dull their flavour.

✢ TURNIPS AND SWEDE
They start to appear in September, a real taste of autumn. Fab mashed up with butter, crème fraîche and black pepper, they can also be roasted in olive oil.

✢ WATERCRESS
So versatile, watercress makes terrific soup. You also can wilt it down into pasta, cooked potatoes and risotto. Make a purée with olive oil and serve it as a pesto-style sauce with lamb or beef.

Meat, fish & more

Try something new, whether it's fish you never usually find or a new cut of meat.

✢ CORNISH BRILL
Brill is a mild-flavoured white fish. A flat fish, it can be huge, but one will usually feed three people. It's easy to bake whole in a hot oven for 15 to 20 minutes, brushed with oil.

✢ CORNISH MACKEREL AND SARDINES
Healthy, oily fish is better suited to the barbecue as it can really stink out your kitchen. The fresher the better, as its high oil content makes it go off quickly.

✢ CORNISH SEA BASS
A summer fish that you don't usually see wild after August. It's terrific baked whole in salt – literally covered in grey salt then baked at a high temperature for about 15 minutes. The fish doesn't taste salty but retains its moisture.

✢ CORNISH TURBOT
You'll find this wonderful fish in August and September. It's a meaty, firm white fish that should be cooked simply – roasted or poached, and it's superb with a buttery sauce for a treat.

✢ PLAICE
Such a British fish, which is very mild and delicate, with its characteristic orange spots. It's usually bought as fillets, which should be simply grilled with a squeeze of lemon juice.

✢ LAMB
Welsh and Scottish lamb from the Uplands are born later in the year. They are lower in fat as their lifestyle is far more energetic than that of their cousins, leading lazy lives in the flat fields in the south of the country.

✢ MALLARD DUCK, PARTRIDGE AND WOOD PIGEON
You'll find these wild game birds from September, and they are a healthy meat – low in fat and cholesterol. Unless you're an aficionado, buy them ready-prepared. Mallard is gamey and not to everyone's taste, whereas partridge is milder and can be found part-boned and stuffed, which is a lovely way to eat it. You only find the breasts of the wood pigeon in most butchers' shops, which are fantastic in a warm salad, perhaps with some chicory, walnuts and a nutty dressing.

✢ SCOTTISH MUSSELS
You'll find these from the beginning of September, mainly rope-grown, so they are fantastically clean. If they aren't, scrape to remove any barnacles and the beards before cooking.

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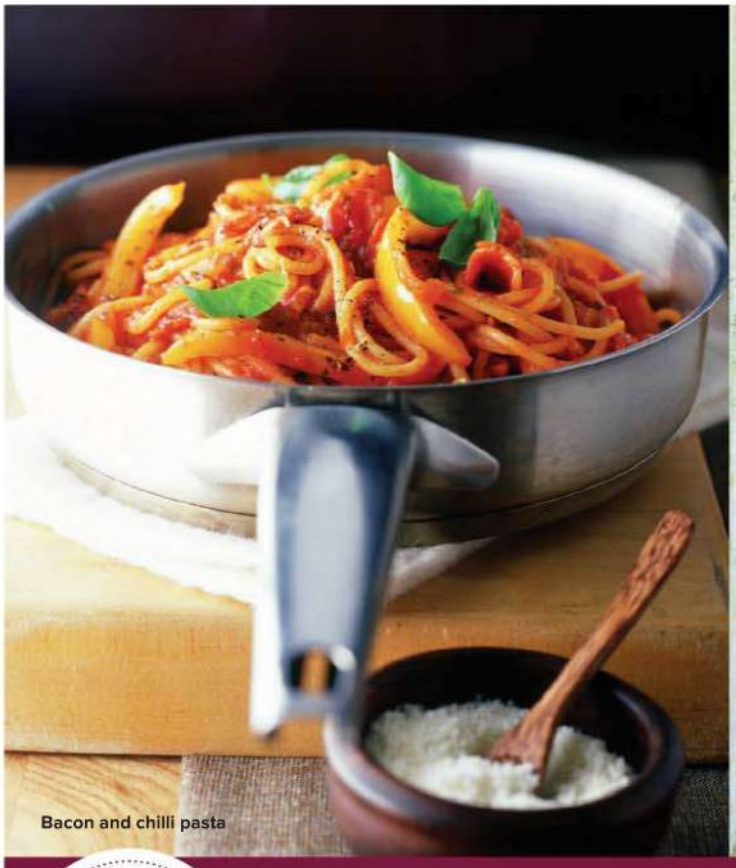

Bacon and chilli pasta

Tomato tart

4 Feel good, easy

In season: tomatoes

Delicious – and simple – recipes to get the best flavour out of tomatoes

Roast tomatoes with garlic and anchovies

Roasted garlicky tomato soup

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Tomato tart

So simple, so delicious: ready-rolled pastry and sweet tomatoes, with home-made pesto for extra flavour!

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 20 TO 30 MINUTES
SERVES 6

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

375g pack ready-rolled puff pastry, unrolled
beaten egg, for glazing
2 to 3tbsp green pesto
500g (1lb 2oz) cherry tomatoes, red and yellow, halved
1 to 2tbsp olive oil

1 Heat the oven to 220 C, 200 C fan, 425 F, gas 7. Trim the pastry round the edges and discard the trimmings. Score a line through the pastry, but not cutting all the way through, about 1 to 2cm (½ to ¾in) inside the edge of the rectangle. Score the rim around the pastry edge in a criss-cross pattern, again, taking care not to cut through. Slide onto a baking sheet.
2 Brush the egg glaze around the pastry edge, taking care that it doesn't run over the sides, otherwise the pastry won't rise properly. Spread the pesto over the pastry, inside the scored line. Arrange the tomatoes on top, cut side up. Drizzle the olive oil over and season.
3 Bake the tart at the top of the oven for 20 to 30 minutes, until the pastry is a golden colour and crisp at the edges. Serve hot or warm.
Per serving: 290 calories, 19g fat (7g saturated), 24g carbohydrate

Bacon and chilli pasta

A gorgeous yet simple dish that's full of flavour – you can add as much chilli as you like with this one.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 20 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY

400g (14oz) spaghetti
200g (7oz) streaky bacon, chopped
2 yellow peppers, sliced
3 garlic cloves, chopped
¼tsp chilli flakes (or to taste)
500g jar tomato pasta sauce with herbs
a little wine (optional)
grated Parmesan and fresh basil leaves, to serve

1 Cook the spaghetti according to the pack instructions, until al dente. Drain and set to one side. Heat a large, heavy-based frying pan and add the bacon. Cook for 5 minutes until just beginning to colour.
2 Add the peppers and cook for 10 minutes until lightly charred. Reduce the heat and add the garlic and chilli flakes, then cook for 2 minutes. Pour in the pasta sauce and bring to the boil. Add a little water (or wine) if you like and serve spooned over the spaghetti with the Parmesan and basil leaves.
Per serving: 558 calories, 16g fat (4.5g saturated), 86g carbohydrate

FEEL GOOD+

TOMATOES
Rich in lycopene, which is thought to prevent against certain cancers, tomatoes are also a rich source of vitamins A, C and E. Lycopene is better absorbed when eaten with a little fat, so add a drop of olive oil. Cooked tomatoes contain higher concentrations of lycopene. Tomatoes also contain potassium, are low in calories and are fat free.

Roasted garlicky tomato soup

Roasting tomatoes really brings out their flavour. This soup is great served with cheesy scones.

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 40 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD / FREEZE

1.5kg (3lb 6oz) ripe vine tomatoes, halved (we used large plum tomatoes)
2 large red onions, peeled and sliced into wedges
8 garlic cloves, unpeeled
few sprigs thyme
4tbsp extra virgin olive oil
¼tsp smoked paprika (optional)
600ml (1pt) hot vegetable stock (we like Swiss Bouillon)
50g (2oz) 0% Greek yogurt, to serve (optional)

1 Heat the oven to 200 C, 180 C fan, 400 F, gas 6. Arrange the tomatoes on a large baking tray, cut side up, and scatter over the onions, garlic and thyme. Season well and drizzle with the oil. Roast for about 30 minutes, until the onions are golden and the garlic very soft.
2 Squeeze out the roasted garlic into a large pan and add the onions and tomatoes, removing the thyme stalks, but scraping the juices into the pan. Add the paprika and stock, bring to the boil, simmer for 10 minutes, then whizz in a food processor. Stir in the 0% Greek yogurt, if liked.
Per serving: 218 calories, 13g fat (2g saturated), 16g carbohydrate

Roast tomatoes with garlic and anchovies

Plum tomatoes are ideal for roasting as they're not so juicy and full of seeds, but use whatever you fancy.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR
SERVES 4

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

1kg (2lb 4oz) plum tomatoes, cut in half lengthways
a little olive oil
a little brown sugar
1 onion, peeled and finely chopped
4 garlic cloves, sliced
50g tin anchovies in oil
2tsp capers

1 Heat the oven to 190 C, 170 C fan, 375 F, gas 5. Put the tomatoes, cut side up, in a shallow tin, and drizzle with the olive oil. Season with sea salt and pepper, and the small sprinkling of brown sugar.
2 Roast for 40 minutes, or until just tinged with brown around the edges. Then sprinkle with the onion, garlic, anchovies (with their oil) and capers, and cook for a further 20 minutes, or until the onion is soft – don't let it burn! Serve warm as a starter with crusty bread. To make a pasta sauce, cool the tomatoes and whizz in a food processor for a rough, rustic texture, or whizz and push through a sieve for a smooth sauce.
Per serving: 134 calories, 8g fat (1g saturated), 11g carbohydrate

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BURSTING WITH REAL NAPOLINA PASSION

The best pasta starts with the right ingredients and that's what we choose for our Napolina Fusilli. We take pure durum wheat, mix it with fresh water from the Neapolitan hills, then shape and dry it for just the right amount of time. The result - a pasta that is bursting with flavour and a perfect 'al dente' bite that Italians love.

The heart of Italian cooking

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A CULINARY ADVENTURER, VALENTINE SPENT FIVE YEARS WORKING IN LONDON'S RESTAURANT KITCHENS BEFORE SETTING UP HIS OWN PRIVATE CATERING COMPANY. PASSIONATE ABOUT SEASONAL FOOD, THIS MOUTHWATERING DISH MAKES USE OF IN-SEASON LEEKS – A USEFUL SOURCE OF POTASSIUM, WHICH ENCOURAGES THE EFFICIENT FUNCTIONING OF THE KIDNEYS.

VALENTINE WARNER'S

Leeks vinaigrette

This is my favourite salad. Calming to prepare and eat, a kind of cooking meditation. Clean the leeks well, as brown has no place in a dish that should be only white, yellow and green.

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 15 MINUTES
SERVES 2

EASY/ PREPARE AHEAD

6 medium leeks
2 small free-range eggs
handful picked parsley leaves, finely chopped
for the vinaigrette:
1 heaped tsp Dijon mustard
squeeze of lemon juice
2 capfuls tarragon or white wine vinegar
1tsp caster sugar
50ml (2fl oz) good extra virgin olive oil

1 Take off the outside layer of the leeks. Chop off all but 10cm (4in) of the dark green end (keep this portion for making leek and potato soup). Wash them really well. Trim the little beard from the end if there is any; do not completely chop off the soil end, as this helps to keep the leek together. If very long, chop each leek in half along the middle.
2 Get some salted water on to boil. Cook the leeks for long enough so that when the point of a knife is rested on them, the weight of the knife naturally slides into the flesh. The leeks should offer no resistance to the blade; they must be soft to the cut and to the teeth. This should take about 7 minutes.
3 When ready, lift the leeks from the hot water into a colander sitting over a small pan. Do so carefully – if you have cut them in half, as the greener part of the leek cooks, each inner layer when handled might have the tendency to slip from the centre like a telescope. Don't throw the water away. Lay the leeks against the sides of the colander with the root ends uppermost, rather than flat across the bottom, as this will allow the water to drain. Run a little cold water over to cool them.
4 Using the leftover leek water, gently boil the eggs for 7 minutes until hard. When done, put them in a bowl of cold water to cool completely, as grating a warm egg is never particularly successful.
5 Turn your attention to the vinaigrette. Mix the mustard, lemon juice, vinegar, sugar and a pinch of salt in a bowl before slowly beating in the olive oil with a fork. It will emulsify into a creamy consistency.
6 It is time to assemble the dish. In the

Valentine Warner's Leeks vinaigrette

MAIN PHOTOGRAPH HOWARD SOOLEY

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centre of a plate, stack the leeks in a triangle, like a log-pile. Peel the eggs, separating the white from the yolk. Grate the white on a medium setting of the grater before grating the yolk in the same way. Spoon the vinaigrette over all the leeks before sprinkling over the egg yolk, parsley and egg white, in 3 separate coloured bands. Destroy the pile instantly with a fork.
Per serving: 312 calories, 25g fat (4.5g saturated), 11g carbohydrate

VALENTINE WARNER'S WHAT TO EAT NOW (MITCHELL BEAZLEY, £20)
Celebrating seasonal cooking, Valentine gets inventive with a great selection of autumnal ingredients, which he says you know will be delicious because "this is rightfully their time." The book features more than 100 dishes, which include quick and easy options, such as Mackerel on toast and Red peppers with walnuts, and others that are to be cooked and eaten at leisure, such as pheasant curry – perfect for a lazy Sunday dinner.

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Easy everyday

We all get into a food rut from time to time, buying the same ingredients, cooking the same recipes. Here's some midweek inspiration using some of your favourite foods cooked in new ways, with plenty of feel good factors, but no compromise on flavour. With new ideas for pasta and special treats for the vegetarians in your life, it's time to get cooking

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PHOTOGRAPH RICHARD JUNG **PROP STYLING** SUE ROWLANDS

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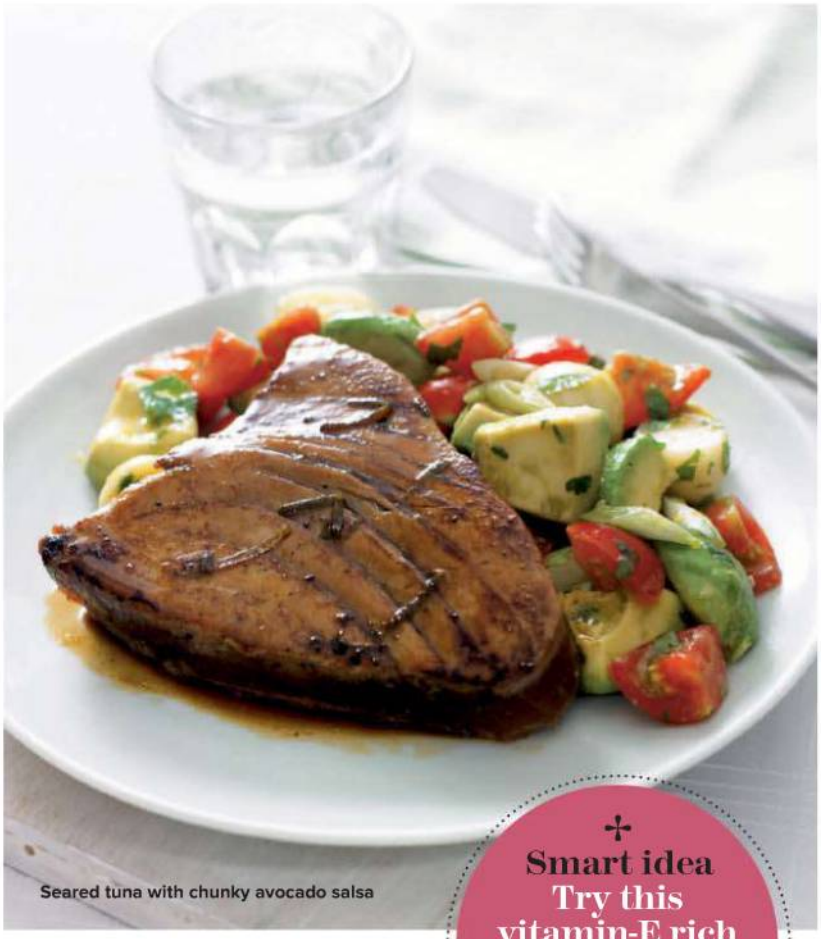

Seared tuna with chunky avocado salsa

Seared tuna with chunky avocado salsa

A quick-to-make, high-protein meal that's packed with delicious flavour.

PREPARATION TIME: 25 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 5 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY

6tbsp soy sauce
2tbsp runny honey
zest and juice 1 lime
4 x 150g (5oz) tuna steaks
for the salsa:
2 ripe avocados, chopped
400g (14oz) tomatoes, chopped
500g (1lb 2oz) new potatoes, cooked
4 spring onions, sliced
handful fresh coriander, chopped

1 Mix the soy sauce, honey and lime zest together and pour over the tuna steaks. Set aside while you make the salsa.
2 Combine the avocados, tomatoes, potatoes and spring onions in a bowl. Toss with the lime juice and coriander. Heat a large frying pan until hot. Remove the tuna from the marinade and add to the pan. Cook on a high heat for 1 to 2 minutes on each side (depending on thickness). Remove fish from the pan, pour in the marinade and bring to a boil. Serve the fish with the marinade drizzled over and the salsa on the side.
Per serving: 490 calories, 22g fat (5g saturated), 31g carbohydrate

Smart idea
Try this vitamin-E rich salsa with grilled salmon or chicken

FEEL GOOD+

TUNA KNOW-HOW
Tuna contains unsaturated fat, which has the same amount of calories as saturated fat, but is much better for you. Unsaturated fat can actually help to reduce cholesterol levels and give your body much-needed essential fatty acids. Tuna has also been associated with the reduction of high blood pressure, the prevention of certain cancers and improving arthritis.

TRY THIS
If you're looking for a tasty lunchbox idea, try replacing the linguine with penne. Then any leftovers from supper will be perfect the next day. Add some rocket for extra antioxidants, too.

GREAT FOR VEGGIES

Linguine with peas, courgettes and feta

Most of a courgette's nutrients are found in the skin, while the flesh is rich in folate.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 10 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY

400g (14oz) linguine
200g (7oz) frozen peas
3tbsp extra virgin olive oil
4 garlic cloves, crushed
3 courgettes, thinly sliced
zest 1 lemon and a squeeze of lemon
small handful fresh basil, finely chopped
150g (5oz) feta cheese, crumbled

1 Cook the pasta in boiling water according to the pack instructions. Add the peas for the final minute of cooking, then drain well.
2 Meanwhile, heat 2tbsp of the oil in a large sauté pan, add the garlic and cook gently for 2 minutes, then add the courgettes and increase the heat to high. Cook for 2 minutes, then stir in the lemon zest and the squeeze of lemon juice. Add the cooked pasta, the remaining oil and the basil. Season and toss well. Serve with the feta sprinkled over.
Per serving: 566 calories, 18g fat (7g saturated), 77g carbohydrate

SMART IDEA
For a lower-fat and lower-salt alternative, you can replace the feta with ricotta.

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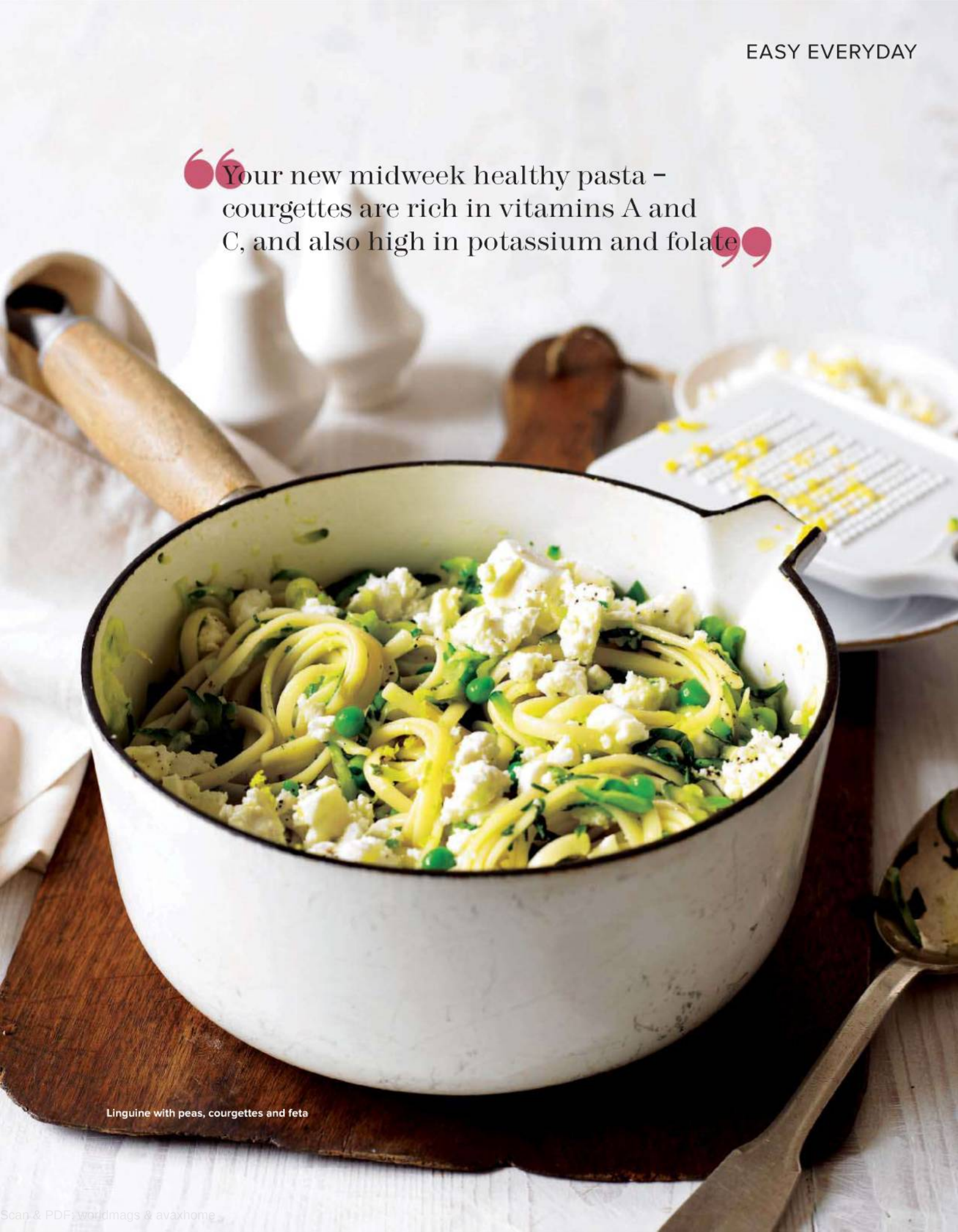
> Your new midweek healthy pasta – courgettes are rich in vitamins A and C, and also high in potassium and folate



Linguine with peas, courgettes and feta

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> This easy-prep, colourful pepper dish is packed full of fibre, vitamins and minerals

Fruity stuffed peppers

Scan to see this recipe on your phone

✣ GREAT FOR VEGGIES

Fruity stuffed peppers

Remember that lentils count as part of your five a day too!

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR 30 MINUTES
SERVES 4 TO 6

✓ **EASY**

4tbsp extra virgin olive oil
2 red, 2 yellow and 2 orange peppers with stems on, halved lengthwise (and through stems), pith and seeds removed
75g (3oz) Puy lentils, rinsed
150g (5oz) basmati and wild rice mix
½ cinnamon stick
6 fresh bay leaves, halved
2 garlic cloves, crushed
100g (4oz) jumbo raisins and golden sultanas, mixed
450ml (15fl oz) boiling vegetable stock
200g (7oz) baby leeks, finely sliced

1 Rub or brush a little of the olive oil around the insides of the cut pepper halves then set them, cut sides up, in a lightly oiled ovenproof dish.
2 Cover the lentils with at least 10cm (4in) boiling water and boil for 10 minutes, then reduce the heat and cook for 15 to 20 minutes until chewy, then drain. Put the rice, cinnamon, bay leaves, garlic, dried fruit and the stock into a medium saucepan. Stir, then bring to the boil. Cover the pan, then lower the heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove the cinnamon stick. Add the lentils to the rice pan, along with the leeks and the remaining oil. Cook, covered, for 5 minutes and season to taste.
3 Heat the oven to 180 C, 160 C fan, 350 F, gas 4. Divide the parcooked rice filling and its liquid evenly among the pepper halves, cover them with foil and bake for 35 to 45 minutes until tender. Serve warm or cool with extra olive oil and balsamic vinegar, if liked.
Per serving: 463-308 calories, 14-9g fat (2-1.5g saturated), 68-45g carbohydrate

Spicy chilli con carne

Spicy chilli con carne

Kidney beans are a rich source of iron, which helps the body to ward off infections.

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 40 MINUTES
SERVES 3 TO 4

✓ **EASY**

1tbsp oil
1 large onion, chopped
500g (1lb 2oz) good-quality minced beef
400g tin chopped tomatoes
420g tin kidney beans in chilli sauce
1tsp English Provender Co Very Lazy red chillies (or any chilli paste), or half a large red chilli, finely chopped
handful fresh coriander, chopped
2% Greek yogurt, to serve (optional)

1 Gently heat the oil in a large saucepan then cook the onion until softened, not browned. Now add the beef and stir well until it has browned. Season well. Add the tomatoes, kidney beans and chilli. Just add a dash of chilli – you can always add more later. Bring to the boil and then turn down to a gentle simmer and let the beef cook for at least 40 minutes – it should be nice and thick with bags of flavour. Check the seasoning and add more chilli if you like.
2 Spoon the chilli into bowls, sprinkle over the chopped coriander and serve with some Greek yogurt on the side.
Per serving: 581-436 calories, 32-24g fat (12-9g saturated), 30-22g carbohydrate

✣ **SMART IDEA**

Make a large batch of this versatile chilli and freeze. When you plan to use it, defrost thoroughly, then bring back to the boil in a saucepan until heated through. Use it as a topping for baked potatoes, or serve it with tortilla chips and an avocado salsa for a relaxed movie night in with friends or family. Simply peel, stone and chop 2 avocados, mix with the juice of 1 lemon, ½ diced red onion, 4 deseeded and chopped ripe tomatoes and 2tbsp chopped fresh coriander.

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“Such a simple pasta sauce, prepared and on the table in under 25 minutes”

Fast ratatouille pasta (recipe page 26)

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Cook's tip
You could replace the peas with soya beans for an extra protein boost

Roast Parma monkfish with mushy peas (recipe page 26)

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> Monkfish is low in calories and contains vitamin B3, which helps to boost your metabolism

✢ GREAT FOR VEGGIES

Fast ratatouille pasta

Tomato sauce is high in lycopene, a cancer-fighting antioxidant.

PREPARATION TIME: 5 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 20 MINUTES
SERVES 4

✓ **EASY**

1 aubergine, diced
1 courgette, diced
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1tbsp olive oil
350g jar cherry tomato pasta sauce
1tsp dried oregano
400g (14oz) penne pasta
Parmesan, to serve (optional)

1 Fry the aubergine, courgette and garlic in the olive oil until starting to colour, about 5 to 8 minutes. Add the tomato sauce and the oregano, season well with salt and pepper, and leave to simmer while you cook the pasta according to the pack instructions.
2 Serve the pasta with the ratatouille, and a sprinkling of Parmesan, if you like.
Per serving: 400 calories, 5g fat (1g saturated), 77g carbohydrate

FEEL GOOD+

AUBERGINE KNOW-HOW
Aubergines are a good source of potassium, which can help to prevent fluid retention. Aubergines can absorb oil like a sponge, so always cook them on a high heat or, alternatively, toss in oil, then roast in the oven on high: around 200 C, 180 C fan, 400 F, gas 6.

Roast Parma monkfish with mushy peas

Nutrients in fresh peas may degrade in transit, so frozen ones are often more nutritious.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 15 MINUTES
SERVES 4

✓ **EASY**

4 x 175g (6oz) monkfish fillets
50g (2oz) butter, melted
8 sage leaves
12 slices Parma ham
for the mushy peas:
300ml (½pt) vegetable stock
25g (1oz) butter
350g (12oz) frozen peas
1tbsp fresh mint leaves

1 Heat the oven to 200 C, 180 C fan, 400 F, gas 6. Brush each monkfish fillet with some melted butter. Place 2 sage leaves on each fillet, season and wrap each in 3 slices of Parma ham. Brush with the remaining butter, place on a baking tray and cook in the oven for 12 to 15 minutes. The fish should feel firm to the touch when gently squeezed.
2 Meanwhile, make the mushy peas. Put the stock and butter in a saucepan, bring to the boil and add the peas. Cook for 3 to 4 minutes until hot, then purée in a blender with the mint leaves until smooth. Check the seasoning and return to the saucepan to keep warm. Place a large spoonful of mushy peas on warmed plates, top with the sliced monkfish and serve with new potatoes or wholegrain rice.
Per serving: 388 calories, 20g fat (11g saturated), 8g carbohydrate

✢ GREAT FOR VEGGIES

Linguine with roasted aubergines, sun-dried tomatoes and pine nuts

To reduce calories, omit the pine nuts and replace Parmesan with low-fat Cheddar.

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 40 TO 45 MINUTES
SERVES 4

✓ **EASY / PREPARE AHEAD**

2 medium aubergines, cut into 1cm (½in) cubes
75g (3oz) sun-dried tomatoes in oil, drained (with 3tbsp oil reserved) and finely sliced
2 red onions, chopped
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
2tbsp sun-dried tomato paste or purée
400g (14oz) dried linguine
2tbsp fresh basil leaves, torn
50g (2oz) pine nuts, toasted
fresh Parmesan, to serve*

1 Heat the oven to 200 C, 180 C fan, 400 F, gas 6. Toss the cubed aubergines with 2tbsp of the sun-dried tomato oil (or olive oil). Season with salt and black pepper, place on a baking sheet and roast in the oven for 25 to 30 minutes, until well roasted and tinged brown around the edges.
2 Heat the remaining tomato oil in a large saucepan and cook the onions and garlic for 10 minutes. Add the sun-dried tomatoes, tomato paste and the roasted aubergines and cook for another 5 minutes.
3 Cook the linguine in a pan of boiling water, drain well, then add to the aubergine pan along with the basil. Toss well and divide the mixture between 4 warmed plates. Sprinkle the pine nuts over the top and serve with a little freshly grated Parmesan cheese.
**Strict vegetarians would need to use a Parmesan substitute*
Per serving: 596 calories, 23g fat (2g saturated), 81g carbohydrate

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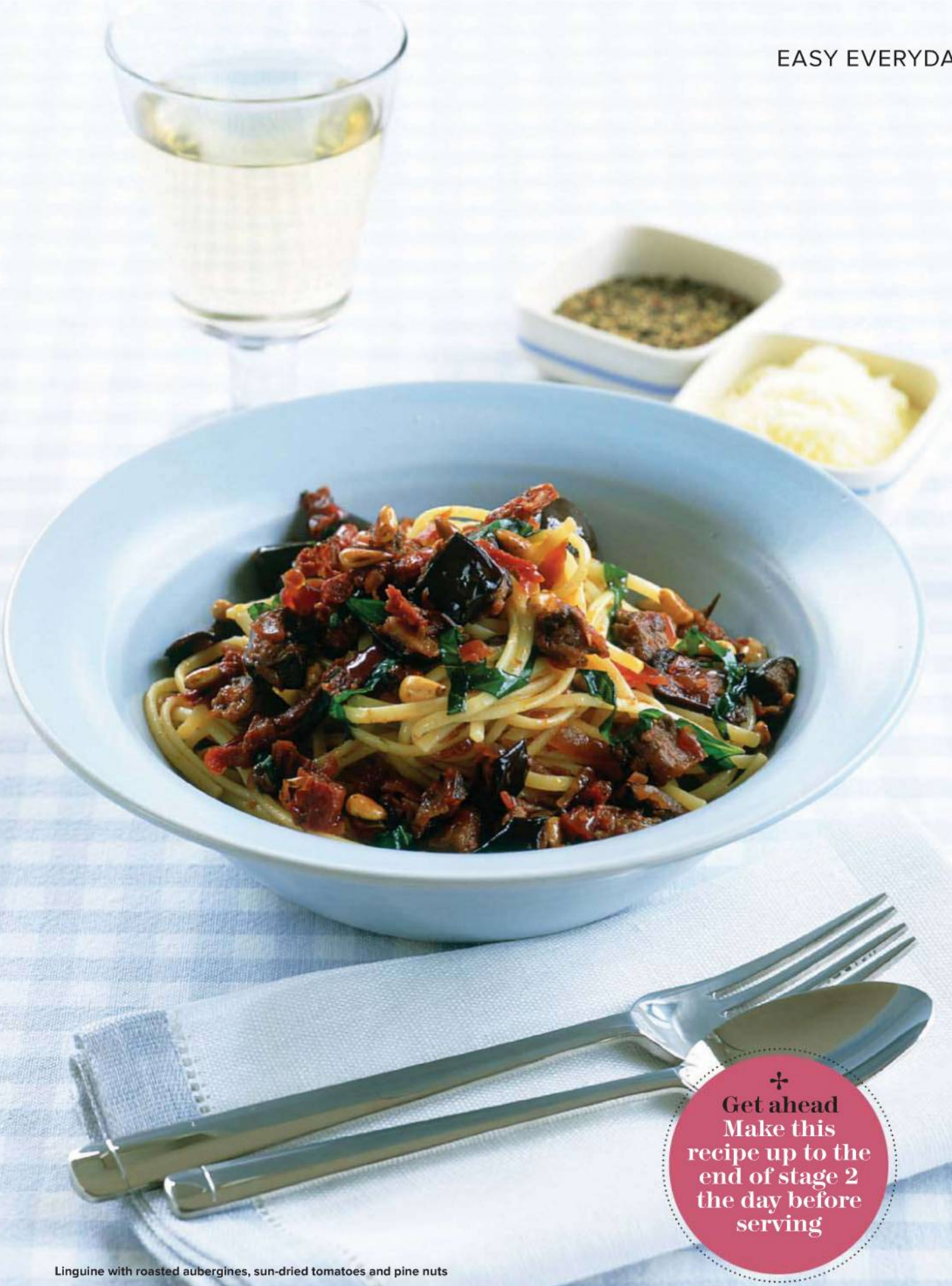

Get ahead
Make this recipe up to the end of stage 2 the day before serving

Linguine with roasted aubergines, sun-dried tomatoes and pine nuts

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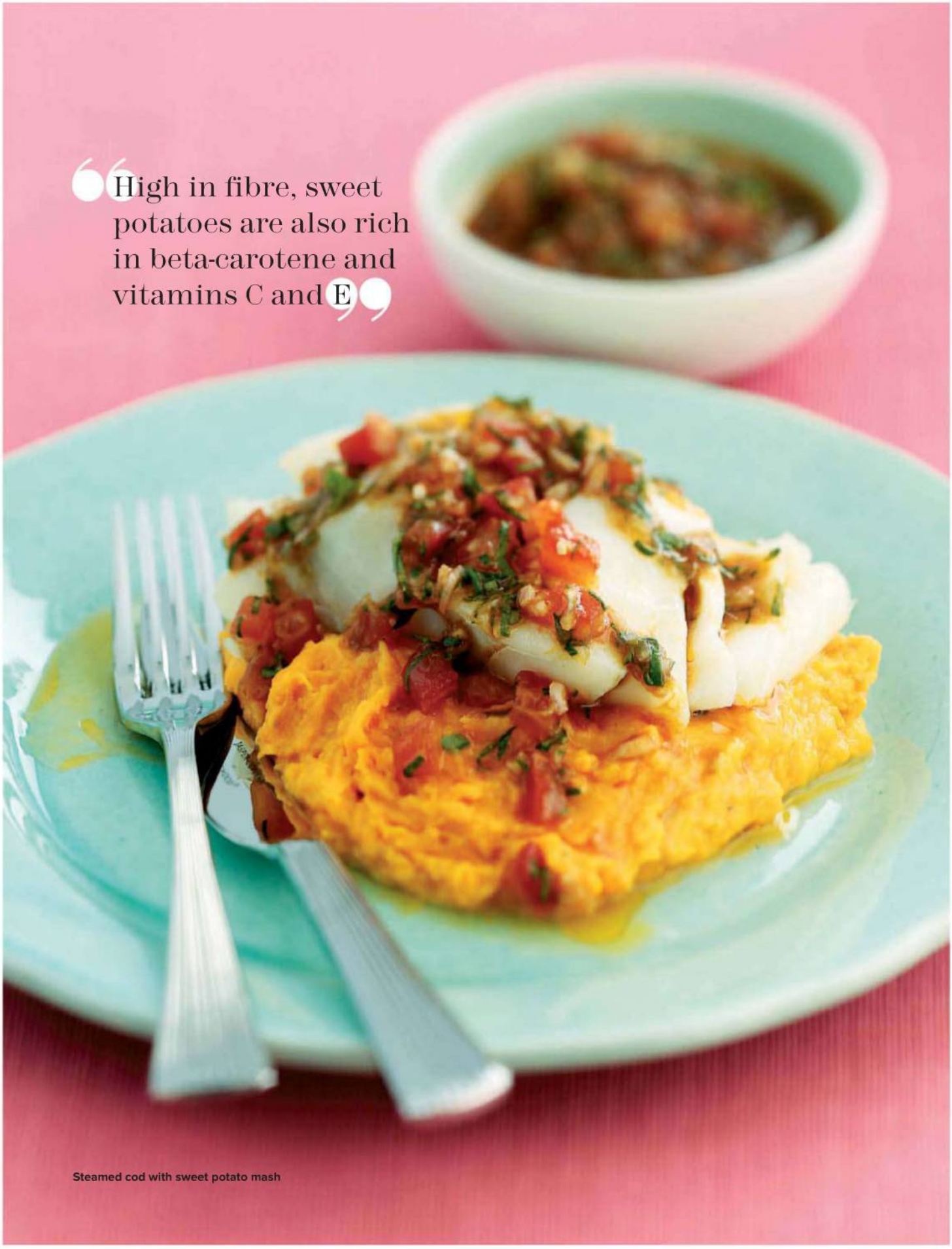

Steamed cod with sweet potato mash

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Steamed cod with sweet potato mash

Steaming the potatoes will help to retain both its flavour and nutrients.

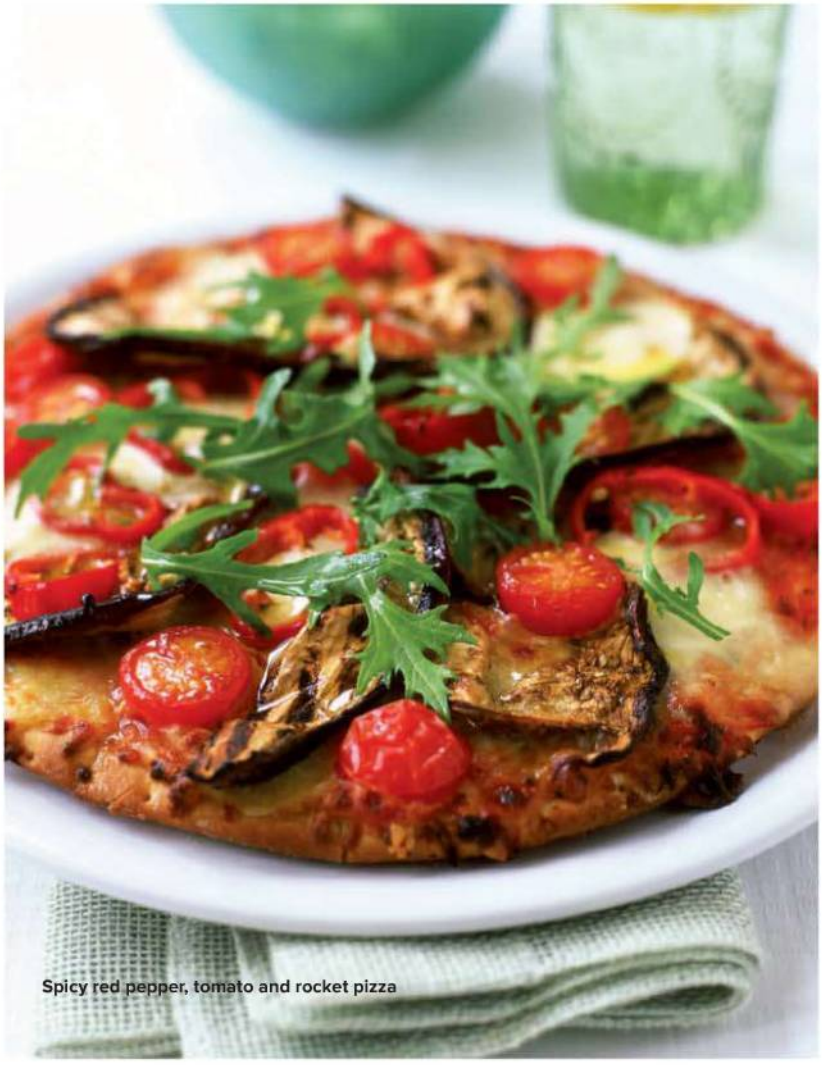
PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 25 MINUTES
SERVES 2

EASY

1 shallot, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed
2 plum tomatoes, peeled, deseeded and finely chopped
½tsp caster sugar
finely grated zest ½ lemon
1tbsp extra virgin olive oil
4tbsp tomato juice
4 basil leaves, finely chopped
2 large sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
1tbsp half-fat crème fraîche
grating of nutmeg
2 x 175g (6oz) cod fillets, skin on

1 Put the shallot, garlic, tomatoes, sugar and lemon zest in a bowl. Stir in the olive oil, tomato juice and basil, and season. Place the sweet potatoes in a steamer and cook for 15 to 20 minutes until soft. Mash the sweet potatoes, stir in the crème fraîche and season with nutmeg, salt and pepper. Keep warm while you cook the cod.
2 Season the cod, place in the steamer and cook for 5 to 6 minutes or until they turn opaque. Place a spoonful of mash in the centre of 2 plates, top with the fish and drizzle over the tomato vinaigrette.
Per serving: 476 calories, 16g fat (6.5g saturated), 50g carbohydrate

Cook's tip
You could use any firm white fish (such as hake) instead of the cod



Spicy red pepper, tomato and rocket pizza

GREAT FOR VEGGIES

Spicy red pepper, tomato and rocket pizza

Healthy vegetables, less fat – and so much tastier than shop bought.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 12 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

6tbsp tomato passata
1 large pizza base (or use 2 smaller ones)
225g (8oz) reduced-fat mozzarella*, sliced
1 red pepper, deseeded and sliced
100g (4oz) cherry tomatoes, halved
285g jar grilled aubergines in olive oil, drained
rocket, to serve

1 Put a large baking sheet in the oven. Heat oven to 220 C, 200 C fan, 425 F, gas 7. Spread the passata over the pizza base, then top with the mozzarella, red pepper, cherry tomatoes and aubergines. Drizzle with a little oil from the aubergines and transfer the pizza straight on to the heated baking sheet.
2 Bake for 10 to 12 minutes until the pizza is crispy, then scatter over some rocket leaves and serve. **Strict vegetarians should use a vegetarian mozzarella.*
Per serving: 360 calories, 17g fat (1g saturated), 33g carbohydrate

TRY THIS
If you're feeling extra adventurous, you could even try making your own pizza base by using a bread mix. We like to use a mix for ciabatta. Check out our Tomato, mozzarella and anchovy pizza recipe online at womanandhome.com to see how to make your own base, the easy way, and for another great pizza topping idea.

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Try this
A steamer for fish cooked the healthy way in less than 15 minutes

Steamed pak choi and ginger-wrapped salmon (recipe page 32)

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Creamy chicken with red pesto and olives (recipe page 32)

Cook's tip
The salmon can be wrapped a day in advance and stored in the fridge

Steamed pak choi and ginger-wrapped salmon

This is very low in saturated fat and also full of healthy omega-3s.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 10 TO 15 MINUTES
SERVES 2

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

2 pak choi, trimmed
4 to 6 very fine slices root ginger
2 spring onions, finely shredded
2 salmon fillets, skin removed
for the dressing:
½tbsp sesame oil
½tbsp soy sauce
1½tbsp rice wine vinegar
½tsp sugar

1 Place the pak choi leaves in a colander and pour over boiling water, until they are just beginning to soften. Place the ginger slices and spring onions on top of each of the salmon fillets, and wrap the pak choi leaves around them, folding under at the bottom. Reserve any remaining pak choi.
2 Bring a large pan of water to the boil and place a steamer on top. Put the salmon into the steamer, cover and steam for 10 to 15 minutes, until the fish is pale pink and cooked through.
3 Meanwhile, place the dressing ingredients in a pan with 1tbsp water, and bring to boiling point. Steam the pak choi roots for 3 minutes.
4 When the fish is cooked, transfer to 2 plates and pour over the sauce. Serve with the pak choi and some noodles.
Per serving: 316 calories, 20g fat (3g saturated), 3g carbohydrate

Creamy chicken with red pesto and olives

Olives provide natural antioxidants and are also a good source of vitamin E.

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 25 MINUTES
SERVES 2

EASY

1tbsp oil, plus extra for frying
2 free-range chicken breasts, slashed 3 times along the top
2tbsp red pesto
200ml (7fl oz) hot chicken stock
1 courgette, thinly sliced
2tbsp half-fat crème fraîche
100g (4oz) green beans, trimmed and steamed
2tbsp small black olives, pitted
handful basil leaves, torn

1 Heat the oil in a sauté pan, season the chicken breasts and place them slashed side down in the pan. Fry on a high heat for a couple of minutes until the meat is golden, then flip them over and fry on the other side for another minute or so.
2 Add the pesto to the pan, cook for 2 minutes, then add the stock. Turn up the heat, and simmer quite vigorously for 15 to 20 minutes, until the chicken breasts are cooked through.
3 Meanwhile, heat another frying pan, add a splash of oil and fry the courgette slices until golden brown on both sides. Set aside. When the chicken is cooked, stir in the crème fraîche and season to taste. Add the courgettes, beans and olives to the pan, scatter with the basil and serve immediately.
Per serving: 371 calories, 21g fat (3.5g saturated), 5g carbohydrate

SMART IDEA
Add chunks of unpeeled potatoes, tossed in a little olive oil then roasted for 30 minutes, to give your meal extra carbohydrates. Or, for a change, substitute the chicken for lean pork tenderloin, which has roughly the same fat content as the chicken breasts.

Seafood, saffron and chorizo risotto

A good source of complex carbohydrates makes arborio rice an energy-giving food.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 40 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY

50g (2oz) unsalted butter
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed
175g (6oz) chorizo sausage, diced
200g (7oz) arborio rice
good pinch saffron
1 litre (1¾pt) hot vegetable stock
400g pack frozen seafood selection, defrosted
bunch fresh parsley, finely chopped

1 Melt the butter in a large pan, fry the onion for 10 minutes, then add the garlic and chorizo and cook for a further 5 minutes. Add the rice and saffron, and stir well, so that each grain is coated with the butter. Add a ladleful of hot stock at a time, and stir the risotto continuously, until the liquid has been absorbed and the stock has been used.
2 The trick to a great risotto is steam and stirring – it should take about 20 minutes from start to finish. When ready, stir in the seafood and make sure it's thoroughly heated through, which will take a few minutes more. Finally, stir in the chopped parsley and check the seasoning. Divide the mixture between 4 warmed bowls, garnish with salad leaves and serve.
Per serving: 537 calories, 23g fat (11g saturated), 42g carbohydrate

FEEL GOOD+

SEAFOOD KNOW-HOW
Seafood is a great source of protein and minerals, so it's handy to have a bag of pre-frozen seafood in the freezer. You can use it for adding to a pasta sauce or a simple soup, as it makes a really great filler.

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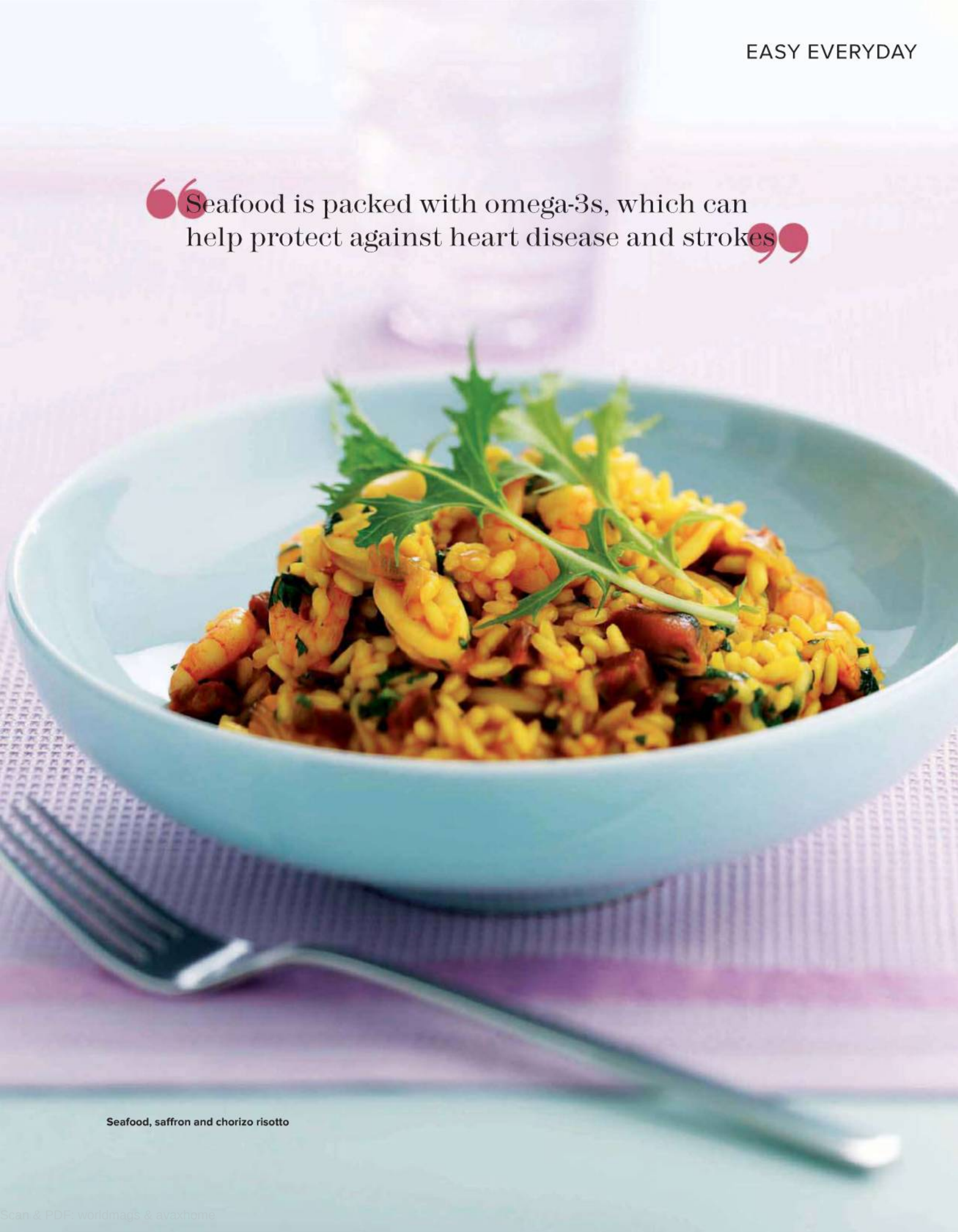
> Seafood is packed with omega-3s, which can help protect against heart disease and strokes



Seafood, saffron and chorizo risotto

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"Steaming spinach helps to retain its high levels of folate – and, as an added bonus, this dish will be ready in 40 minutes"

Med-style chicken

FEEL GOOD+

OLIVE KNOW-HOW

Olives are rich in monounsaturated fats and vitamin E, an antioxidant that protects against harmful free radicals. Olives also have anti-inflammatory properties that may help reduce the symptoms of asthma and arthritis. What's more, Spanish research has suggested that olive oil may help to reduce the risk of developing colon cancer. No wonder we always think of the Mediterranean diet as being so healthy!

Med-style chicken

Chicken skin adds flavour to this dish, but remove before eating to reduce fat content.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 30 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY

1tbsp olive oil
4 organic free-range chicken breasts, skin on
400g tin chopped tomatoes
1 red onion, finely chopped
100ml (4fl oz) chicken stock
240g jar mixed pitted Kalamata olives, drained
400g (14oz) spinach leaves

1 Heat the oven to 200 C, 180 C fan, 400 F, gas 6. Heat the olive oil in a pan and fry the chicken, skin side down, for 5 minutes. Transfer to a roasting tin and add the chopped tomatoes, red onion, stock and olives, season well and cook for 20 minutes.
2 Remove the tin from the oven and scatter the spinach leaves on top. Cover with foil and leave to stand for 2 to 3 minutes to allow the spinach to wilt, then stir in the spinach and serve with rice or mashed potatoes.
Per serving: 383 calories, 20g fat (4g saturated), 6g carbohydrate

Cheese and bacon omelette

Cheese and bacon omelette

Eggs are an excellent source of protein, vitamins and minerals.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 10 MINUTES
SERVES 1

EASY

35g (1¼oz) cubetti di pancetta, or lean smoked bacon, chopped
2 spring onions, sliced
knob of butter
½tbsp olive oil
3 free-range eggs
25g (1oz) Gruyère, grated

1 Fry the pancetta in a pan for a few minutes, until it releases some fat. Add the spring onions and fry for another couple of minutes, then set aside.
2 Melt the butter with the oil in a 20cm (8in) non-stick pan over a medium-high heat. Crack the eggs into a bowl, season and whisk. Swirl the melted butter around the pan, increase heat, and add the eggs.
3 Swirl the eggs around the pan, then leave for a few seconds, so that the eggs begin to set. Using a fork, pull the mix into the middle from the edge, so that the raw egg runs into the gaps.
4 Continue until the base is almost set (the top will still seem a bit runny). If you prefer a plain omelette, then simply fold and serve at this stage. Otherwise, add the pancetta and spring onion filling, scatter over the Gruyère cheese and serve.
Per serving: 573 calories, 48g fat (19g saturated), 0.5g carbohydrate

OMELETTE KNOW-HOW

For an omelette for one person, make sure your frying pan isn't too large, as the eggs will spread too thinly and the omelette will be tough; or too small, as it will be thick and spongy. Have filling ingredients ready to add before you start. Don't overwhisk eggs – use a fork for a light, fluffy omelette. Get your pan super hot but, as butter can burn, add a little olive oil to help prevent this. Speed is the secret – omelettes should be cooked briefly in a very hot pan. It's tempting to stir your eggs, but don't! Allow them to set a bit before using a fork to pull the cooked part from the edges to the pan's centre.

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BILL GRANGER ISN'T A TRAINED CHEF BUT A HOME AND "FAMILY COOK", WHOSE TRULY HOME-MADE RECIPES ARE DELICIOUS, EASY AND AS HEALTHY AS CAN BE. THIS SIMPLE SUPPER IS GIVEN A FEEL GOOD BOOST, THANKS TO THE ADDITION OF PORK, THE LEANEST OF ALL MEATS, AND ASPARAGUS, WHICH IS A SOURCE OF BETA-CAROTENE AS WELL AS VITAMINS C AND E. AND WHAT AN UNUSUAL SALSA WITH PHOSPHORUS-RICH CASHEWS – GREAT FOR TEETH AND BONES.

> "Providing nutritious and delicious meals for loved ones – and taking time out to eat together – is one of life's prime sources of happiness"

BILL GRANGER'S

Pork steaks with cashew nut salsa

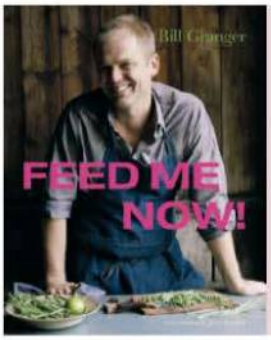
For all of us that have to cook every night, the weekday dinners can, at times, turn into the drudgery of groundhog day. I like dinners that are unashamedly fast and simple – meals that aren't complicated or difficult but easy, straightforward flavourful dishes with just a little twist, to inspire you day to day. With this recipe, I like to make the cashew nut salsa before cooking the steaks, to give the flavours time to meld and soften.

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 10 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

4 x 200g (7oz) pork loin steaks
extra virgin olive oil, to brush
for the cashew nut salsa:
1 large cucumber
60ml (2½fl oz) lime juice
1tbsp fish sauce
1tsp sugar
2 coriander roots, finely chopped
65g (2½oz) roasted unsalted cashews, chopped
small handful coriander leaves, chopped
1 red chilli, finely chopped
blanched asparagus and iceberg lettuce, to serve

1 For the salsa, halve, peel, deseed and finely dice the cucumber. Place in a bowl with all the other ingredients and toss to mix. Set aside.
2 Heat a griddle or heavy-based frying pan over a high heat. Brush the pork steaks with olive oil and season well with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper. Cook for 3 to 4 minutes on each side, depending on thickness, until cooked through.
3 Serve the pork steaks with the asparagus, lettuce and cashew nut salsa.
Per serving: 380 calories, 19g fat (5g saturated), 5g carbohydrate



BILL GRANGER'S FEED ME NOW! **(QUADRILLE, £20)**
Australian chef and restaurateur Bill knows that with many people's busy lifestyles, time is at a premium, and he recognises the need for simple home-cooked dishes that don't take long to prepare. Bill says: "I hope that the uncomplicated recipes in *Feed Me Now!* will give you fresh inspiration for the kitchen." Known for his trademark straightforward food, these are easy dishes, based on relatively few ingredients and prepared with the minimum of fuss.

MAIN PHOTOGRAPH JOHN KERNICK

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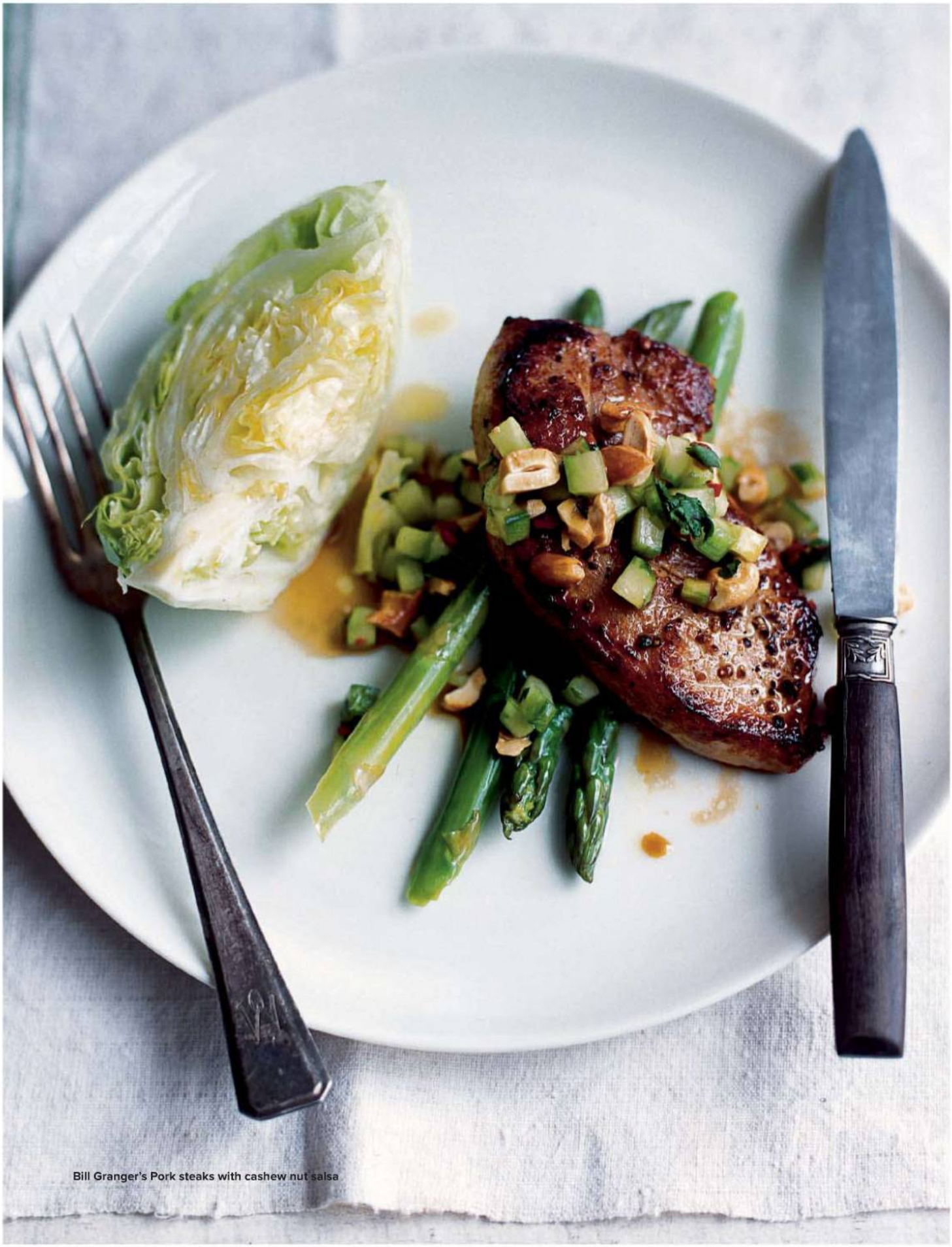

Bill Granger's Pork steaks with cashew nut salsa

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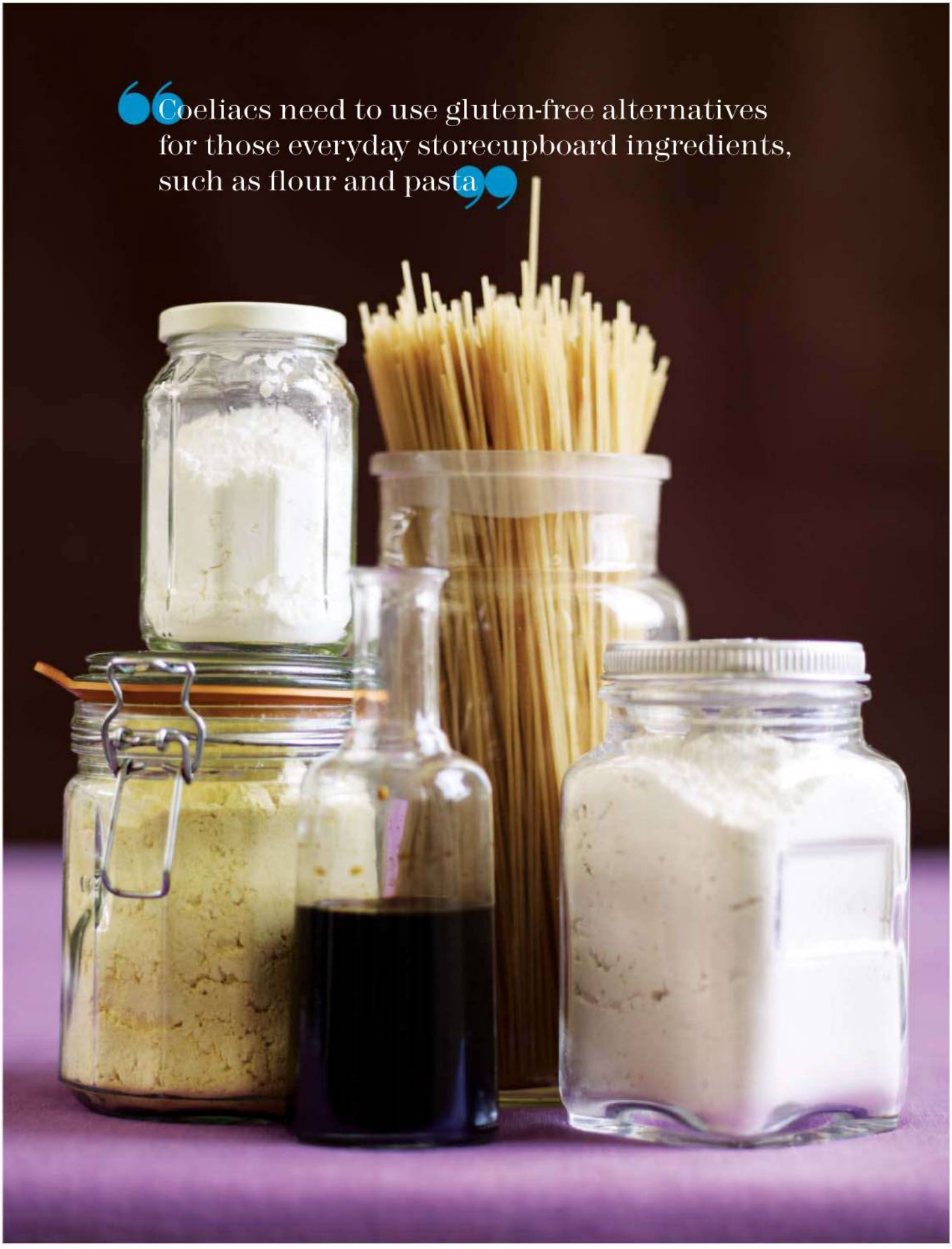

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Eating gluten-free

Following a diet without gluten is becoming easier, but is still not without pitfalls

The most serious form of allergy from gluten is coeliac disease, where a reaction will cause damage to the small intestine. Symptoms vary, but can include diarrhoea, constipation, fatigue and depression. Some people feel the need to avoid gluten because of less serious, but still uncomfortable symptoms such as bloating or abdominal pain, but this is an intolerance to gluten, not an allergic reaction. The good news is that it is far easier now to buy gluten-free products than ever before, largely due to the hard work of Coeliac UK, a dedicated charity supporting people with coeliac disease (coeliac.org.uk; 0845-3052060 for the helpline). All the major supermarkets now have dedicated "free from" ranges, so sufferers can safely indulge in gluten-free breads, cakes and pastas.

✢ WHAT IS GLUTEN?

Gluten is a protein found in wheat, oats and barley. It is, therefore, found within the most common of foods, such as bread, pasta, cakes, biscuits, pizza and flour. It is also present in more unexpected foods, such as soy sauce and beer. Soups, ready-meals and sausages can also contain gluten. While eating out presents more of a challenge, more restaurants now have an understanding of the problem, but takeaways are even trickier.

✢ FOLLOWING A GLUTEN-FREE DIET

Initially you see the barriers – no toast or standard cereals for breakfast, and forget that spaghetti carbonara – but, in time, you will see there are plenty of delicious foods to choose from. But what are the pitfalls beginners and those cooking for gluten-intolerant friends or family should look for?

✢ Spelt flour and other products

There were often stories reported that spelt, an ancient form of wheat first planted here by the Romans, was suitable for a gluten-free diet. Not so – it still contains gluten, so should be avoided by coeliacs. It does seem, however, that people with a mild intolerance, not a disease, can tolerate spelt.

✢ Soy sauce

Made from fermented wheat, hence Chinese takeaways become a bit of a nightmare! For home-cooking, use Tamari, which is a wheat-free kind of soy with a slightly richer, delicious flavour.

✢ Baking

Unfortunately, you can't just substitute gluten-free ingredients for those containing gluten, just as you can't simply times a cake recipe by one and a half to make a bigger cake. Recipes are required (see recommend reading, right) and it's amazing how creative these cooks can be. Grace Cheetham, for example, makes a rich, sweet pastry using a combination of rice flour, gram (chickpea) flour and ground almonds. Her soda bread uses potato flour, gram and rice flour. You can buy gluten-free bicarbonate of soda, from Doves Farm and other specialists, which acts as a raising agent in cakes. Cornmeal or polenta is another good cake-baking ingredient, often used by the Italians. Check out our recipe for Orange polenta cake on womanandhome.com, replacing the baking powder with gluten-free bicarbonate of soda.

✢ Thickening sauces

This is not too difficult as cornflour is gluten free (though always double-check the label or buy from Doves Farm or other specialist suppliers). Potato flour is frequently used for thickening by the French and, in India, curries are thickened using ground nuts such as cashews or almonds.

✢ The pasta alternative

Especially where kids are concerned, it can initially be a struggle finding replacements for a quick pasta meal. But there are now plenty of healthy options, as well as gluten-free pasta on the shelves, and rice and potatoes are the obvious choices. All the pulses, which includes lentils, the beans (borlotti, cannellini, kidney, butterbeans) and chickpeas are not only an excellent source of vegetable protein, but they also count towards your five-a-day intake.

✢ PLEASE NOTE: If you are in any way concerned that you may have symptoms of coeliac disease, you should contact your GP immediately.

We recommend....

RECOMMENDED READING

✢ The Best Gluten-Free, Wheat-Free & Dairy-Free Recipes
by Grace Cheetham (Duncan Baird Publishing, £12.99)
✢ The Big Wheat & Gluten Free Cookbook
by Jody Vassallo and Dianne Boyle (Grub Street, £12.99)
✢ The Gluten-Free Cookbook For Kids
by Adriana Rabinovich (Vermilion, £12)

RECOMMENDED WEBSITES FOR INFO & PRODUCTS

✢ coeliac.org.uk
✢ simply-free.co.uk
✢ juvela.co.uk
✢ goodnessdirect.co.uk
✢ dovesfarm.co.uk

For more inspiration, check out our recipes on womanandhome.com.

WORDS JANE CURRAN **PHOTOGRAPH** RICHARD JUNG **STYLING** SUE ROWLANDS

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‘made without wheat’ new from your m&s

Are you a coeliac? Or do you just prefer to avoid wheat in your diet?

Then you’ll love the delicious new range of bread and cakes, specially developed to be suitable for coeliacs, from M&S. And unlike some other gluten free ranges, you can trust M&S to have made absolutely no compromise on quality or flavour.

New bread loaves

Gluten free loaves are often long life, which can affect the taste and texture. These aren’t, so they’re soft, light and delicious – just enjoy them as you would regular bread. Choose from either a 400g white loaf or 400g brown seeded loaf. Or why not try the pack of four soft rolls, available in either brown or white.

New cakes

A gluten free diet shouldn’t mean missing out on treats – take your pick from indulgent Chocolate Brownies, Caramel Crunch Squares, Lemon Sponge Cake, Orange & Polenta Loaf Cake, Almond Frangipane, and Chocolate and Cherry Cake.

GOOD NEWS FOR COELIACS

M&S product developers have spent a year developing the latest products. They use ingredients such as rice flour, tapioca starch and potato starch to replace wheat.

The new lines will bring “made without wheat” up to 55 products, which makes it the largest own-brand range on the high street.

Many of the breads and cakes will also be available at M&S cafés and delis.

From September, look out for seasonal new additions to the range, which will include gluten free mince pies, Christmas cake and Christmas puddings.

M&S food – allergy and intolerance information

If you are shopping for yourself or entertaining a friend or relative with an allergy or intolerance, there are a number of ways M&S can help, including:

Allergy labelling

They highlight allergy information using the “contains box” on the back of packaging – helping you to easily identify if a product is suitable for your diet without having to read through the ingredients list. M&S also highlight foods that you wouldn’t normally expect to be gluten free, such as cakes, with their gluten free logo on the front of the pack.

Allergy lists

M&S lists can help you to shop for M&S foods made without gluten, nuts, yeast, dairy, egg, sesame and soya. They are updated monthly and available from stores, customer services or their health website.

For more information visit marksandspencer.com/health

YOUR M&S

SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY. SELECTED PRODUCTS IN SELECTED STORES ONLY

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> Over 40% of queries we receive through our health website are regarding gluten free products, by far the largest single query we have

Claire Hughes – M&S Nutritionist

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Comfort food

On days when the cold seems to creep inside, banish those approaching-winter blues with a curing, warming meal. Our one-pot dishes include old favourites that have been given a health make-over, reducing calories while ensuring they still pack a flavoursome punch. Risottos, hearty casseroles, soups, pot-roasted chicken – all for guilt-free tucking in!

PHOTOGRAPH RICHARD JUNG **PROP STYLING** SUE ROWLANDS

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✢ GREAT FOR VEGGIES

Wild mushroom risotto

Mushrooms, especially white caps, are a good source of vegetable protein as well as potassium and B vitamins.

PREPARATION TIME: 5 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 30 MINUTES
SERVES 4

✓ **EASY**

2tbsp olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, crushed
300g (10oz) wild or cultivated mushrooms, sliced
splash white wine
300g (10oz) arborio rice
850ml (1½pt) hot vegetable stock
2tbsp tarragon, chopped
Parmesan, freshly grated (vegetarian equivalent if you're a strict veggie)

1 Heat the oil in a large saucepan, add the onion and garlic and fry for 5 minutes until softened. Add the mushrooms, cook over a high heat for 2 to 3 minutes, then add the white wine. Bring to the boil to cook off the alcohol, then stir in the rice, coating in the oil.
2 Add the stock, a ladleful at a time, stirring well between each addition until all the liquid has been absorbed. It's the stirring action that will give the risotto a creamy texture, as the stirring releases the starch in the rice. It should take just under 20 minutes for the rice to be cooked through.
3 Once cooked, stir in the tarragon and some grated Parmesan. Leave to stand, covered, for 2 minutes, before serving.
Per serving: 388 calories, 8g fat (1.5g saturated), 59g carbohydrate

Wild mushroom risotto

Pot-roast chicken with creamy tarragon sauce

Dark or white meat? Whatever you prefer, you'll be boosting your potassium intake – vital for nerve and muscle functioning.

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 2 HOURS
SERVES 6

✓ **EASY**

2tsp oil
1 large onion, finely chopped
250g (9oz) smoked bacon lardons
1 large free-range organic chicken, around 1.8kg (4lb)
large bunch fresh tarragon
500ml (18fl oz) dry English cider
3 to 4tbsp half-fat crème fraîche
you will need:
a lidded, heatproof, ovenproof casserole dish, in which the chicken can fit flat

1 In a large frying pan, heat the oil then cook the onion until softened. Remove and set aside, then add the lardons and cook until browned and crispy. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on kitchen paper. Now brown the chicken in the bacon fat on all sides – a couple of large wooden spoons will help to turn it. Heat the oven to 150 C, 130 C fan, 300 F, gas 2.
2 Put the onion and lardons back into the casserole dish. Push a few whole sprigs of tarragon into the chicken cavity, then place the chicken on the bacon mix. Season and pour the cider around the chicken.
3 Bring to the boil on the hob, then place in the oven and cook for 2 hours. Now remove the whole chicken from the pot – it will be tender, so use a fish slice or 2 to help. Leave it on a plate covered with foil while you make the sauce. Chop the remaining tarragon. Skim off any excess fat from the casserole then add the tarragon and crème fraîche. Bubble for a few minutes on the hob.
4 The easiest way to serve this is to pull the chicken off the bone (it will just fall away), then slice it. Pour the sauce over the chicken to serve. This dish is delicious accompanied by green beans and some steamed potatoes.
Per serving: 460 calories, 19g fat (6g saturated), 3.5g carbohydrate

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Cook's tip
Rest a chicken by standing it with its bottom up, so juices run to the drier breast area

Pot-roast chicken with creamy tarragon sauce

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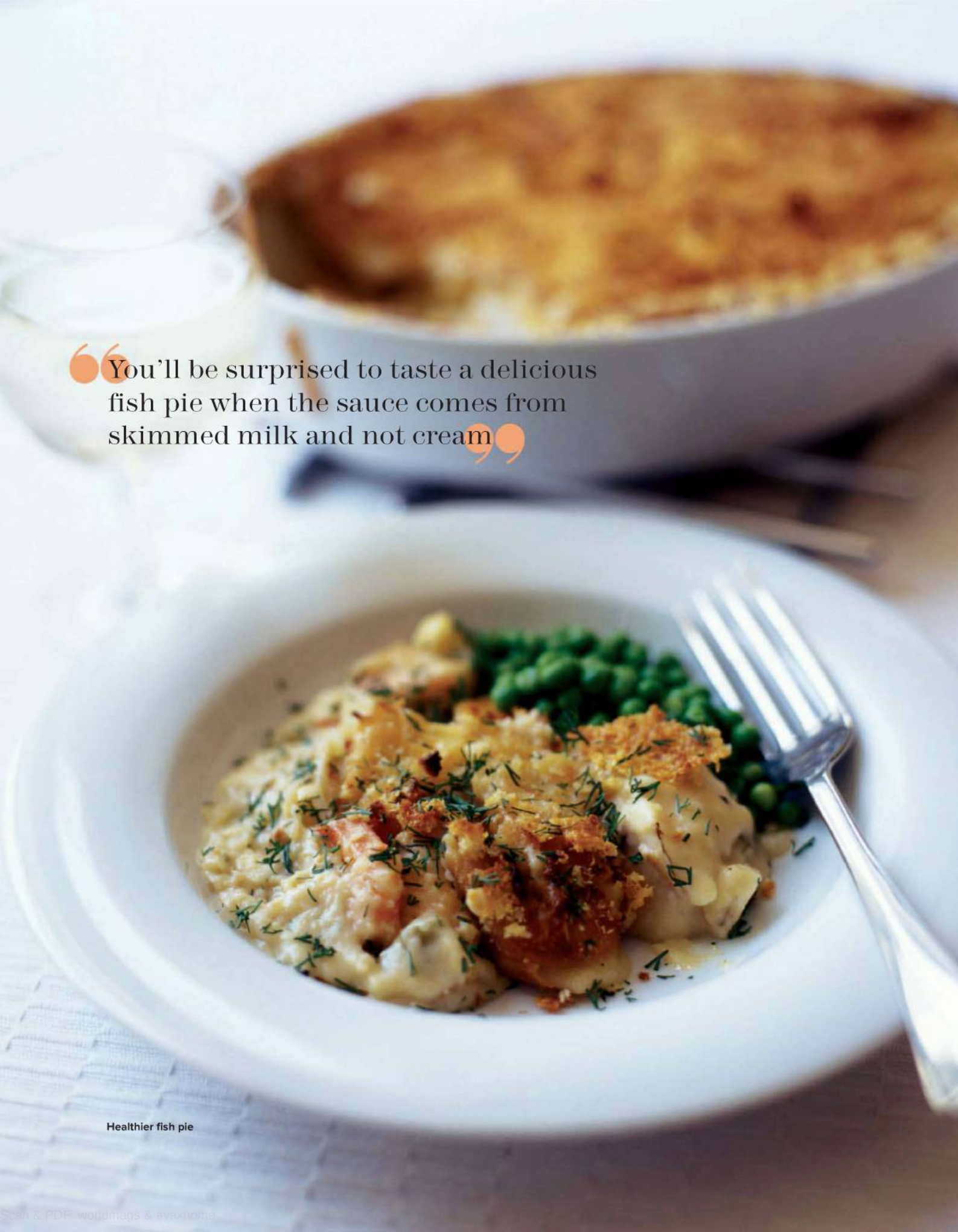

> You'll be surprised to taste a delicious fish pie when the sauce comes from skimmed milk and not cream

Healthier fish pie

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Healthier fish pie

This sauce is made with skimmed milk and fish stock to reduce fat content, not flavour.

PREPARATION TIME: 30 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 40 MINUTES
SERVES 8

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

1.3kg (3lb) floury potatoes, peeled and cut into large chunks
3 bay leaves
350ml (12fl oz) skimmed milk, mixed with 350ml (12fl oz) fish stock
350g (12oz) smoked haddock fillets
50g (2oz) butter
4tbsp flour
200g (7oz) fresh raw king prawns, shelled
350g (12oz) salmon, cut into chunks
5tbsp breadcrumbs
2tbsp Parmesan cheese, grated
handful fresh dill, finely chopped, to serve

1 Steam the potatoes for 25 minutes until tender. Meanwhile, place the bay leaves with 600ml (1pt) of the milk and stock mix in a shallow, lidded pan and heat until steaming. Add the haddock fillets, cover, poach gently for 10 minutes, then remove the fish from the milk, reserving the liquid. Allow the fish to cool slightly, then remove the skin and break into large chunks.
2 Heat the oven to 180 C, 160 C fan, 350 F, gas 4. Melt the butter in a separate saucepan and add the flour. Cook for a couple of minutes, then gradually stir in the poaching liquid, until you have a smooth white sauce. Check the seasoning.
3 Mash the potatoes with the remaining milk and stock mix and season. In a gratin dish, place the haddock pieces, king prawns and raw salmon and pour over the white sauce. Spoon or pipe over the mash, then scatter over the breadcrumbs and Parmesan. Bake in the oven for 30 minutes, or until the crust is golden and crisp, and the sauce is bubbling up the sides. Leave to stand for 10 minutes, and serve scattered with the fresh dill.
Per serving: 388 calories, 12g fat (5g saturated), 80g carbohydrate

SMART IDEA
Further reduce the fat content of this dish by omitting the Parmesan and replacing it with grated lemon zest.

Rösti-topped spicy cottage pie

The perfect health food, kidney beans provide protein without any fat.

PREPARATION TIME: 30 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR 45 MINUTES
SERVES 4

PREPARE AHEAD / FREEZE

1tbsp vegetable oil
1 onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 red pepper, chopped
1 large red chilli, chopped
500g (1lb 2oz) minced beef
2tbsp plain flour
2tsp tomato purée
500ml (18fl oz) beef stock
1tbsp Worcestershire sauce
210g tin chopped tomatoes
400g tin kidney beans, drained and rinsed
for the topping:
3 large baking potatoes
4 sun-dried tomatoes, chopped
basil, to serve (optional)
you will need:
2-litre (3½pt) deep baking dish

1 Heat the oven to 180 C, 160 C fan, 350 F, gas 4. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large saucepan and add the onion, garlic, red pepper and chilli. Cook on a low heat for 10 to 15 minutes. Add the beef, turn up the heat and cook until the mince is well browned.
2 Add the flour and tomato purée, stir well. Add the stock, Worcestershire sauce, tomatoes and kidney beans. Season. Leave to cook on a very gentle heat for 45 minutes to 1 hour. Place in the baking dish.
3 Meanwhile, prepare the topping. Peel and steam the potatoes whole for 10 minutes, then coarsely grate. Place lightly on the filling, scatter over the tomatoes and drizzle with a little oil.
4 Bake on the centre shelf of the preheated oven for 30 to 40 minutes or until browned and bubbling. Scatter over the basil, if you like, to serve. The filling will freeze well for up to a month.
Per serving: 590 calories, 26g fat (9g saturated), 49g carbohydrate

Rich beef casserole with porcini and port

Boost vitamin intake with cooked carrots, which convert beta carotene into vitamin A.

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES, PLUS MARINATING
COOKING TIME: 2 HOURS 30 MINUTES
SERVES 8

PREPARE AHEAD / FREEZE

2 garlic cloves, peeled
leaves from 4 stalks rosemary, finely chopped
50ml (2fl oz) olive oil
350ml (12fl oz) late-bottled vintage port
1kg (2lb 4oz) stewing beef, cut into 4cm (1½in) cubes
50g (2oz) porcini mushrooms
150g (5oz) pancetta, cubed
1 onion, chopped
2 carrots, diced
2 celery stalks, sliced
2tbsp plain flour
300ml (½pt) rich beef stock
16 small shallots, peeled
250g (9oz) chestnut mushrooms, halved or quartered

1 With a pestle and mortar, pound the garlic, rosemary and a little black pepper. Stir in the oil and 50ml (2fl oz) of the port. Put in a sealable bag with the beef, coating it. Refrigerate overnight, or for 24 hours.
2 Soak the porcini in enough hot water to cover. Brown the beef in batches in a large lidded pan, then remove. Add the pancetta and cook until the fat runs. Add the onion, carrots and celery. Cook for 15 minutes. Stir in the flour and cook for 1 to 2 minutes.
3 Return the beef to the pan with the stock, remaining port, porcini and its liquid (strained to remove grit). Bring to the boil, then simmer for 1 hour 30 minutes. Add the shallots and mushrooms; cook for 45 minutes. Serve with sliced potatoes baked in stock.
Per serving: 394 calories, 17g fat (5g saturated), 13g carbohydrate

SMART IDEA
Pre-cut meat from the supermarket, meant for casseroles, is often cut too small and simply disintegrates during cooking. Instead, buy large pieces of chuck, shin or brisket from your butcher, then trim and cut into pieces yourself.

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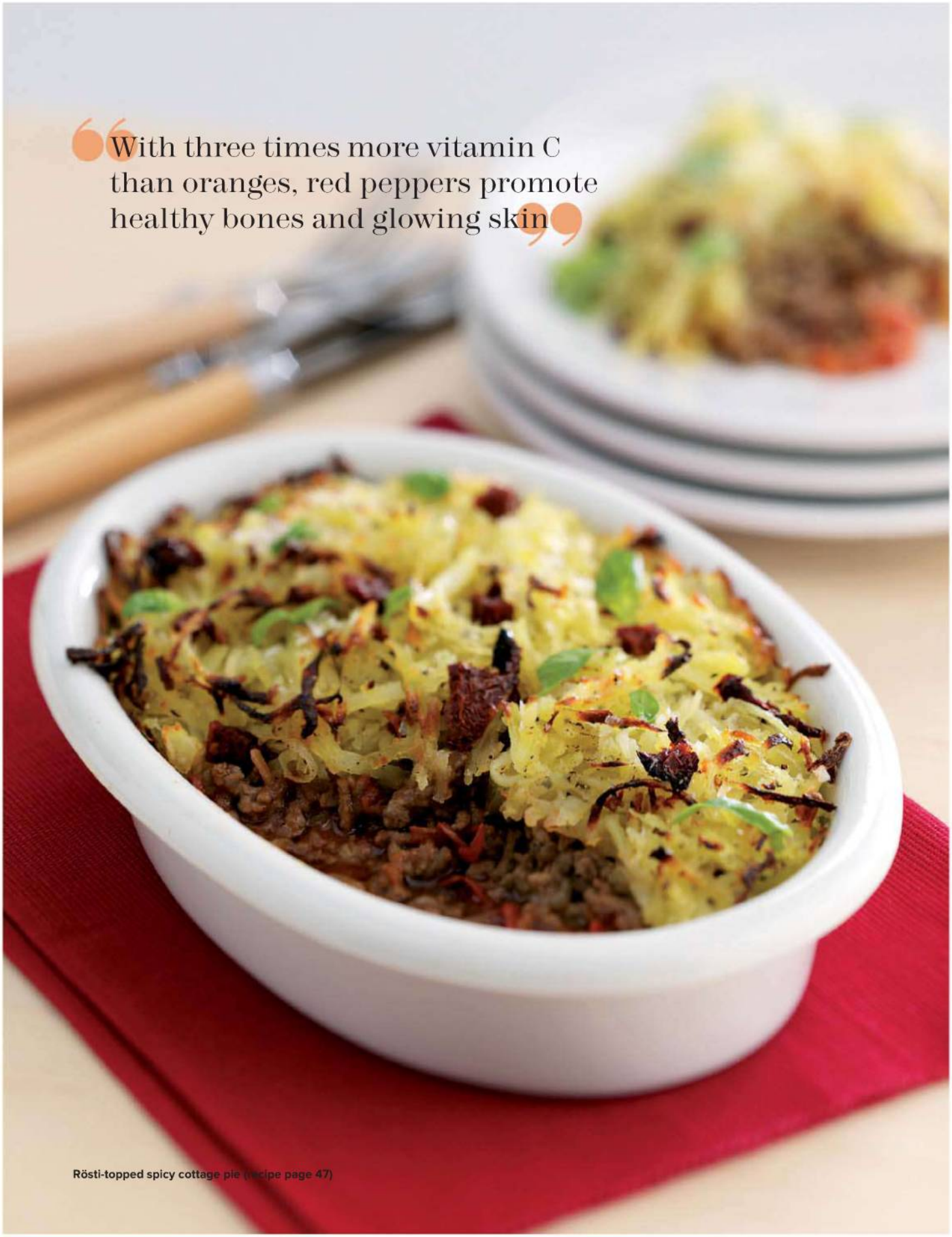

Rösti-topped spicy cottage pie (recipe page 47)

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Rich beef casserole with porcini and port (recipe page 47)

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✣ GREAT FOR VEGGIES

Feta and hummus soup

This Middle-Eastern inspired dish contains cholesterol-free hummus – a delicious, guilt-free addition to this easy-to-make meal.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 10 MINUTES
SERVES 6

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

300g carton hummus
450g jar roasted red peppers, with juices
small handful fresh coriander
½tsp smoked paprika or freshly ground black pepper
200g (7oz) feta cheese

1 Combine the hummus with twice the volume of hand-hot water (use the container as a measure) in a large saucepan. Chop the red peppers and add to the pan along with their juices. Add most of the coriander, reserving some for the garnish, and stir well. Bring to the boil, part-cover the pan and reduce to a simmer for 5 minutes, or until very hot.
2 Pour the pan contents into a blender and blitz to a purée with the paprika or pepper. Return to the pan for 2 minutes to reheat. Ladle into serving dishes and add 2 finger-like slices of feta with a sprig of coriander to each. Serve hot. Alternatively, this soup can be chilled and served cold.
Per serving: 241 calories, 18g fat (5g saturated), 9g carbohydrate

Feta and hummus soup

Lamb shanks with roasted vine tomatoes

This marinade provides you with vitamin C, thanks to the fruit juice, and can also be cooked down to make a delicious sauce.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES, PLUS MARINATING
COOKING TIME: 2 HOURS 10 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD / FREEZE

4 lamb shanks
350ml (12fl oz) red wine
150ml (¼pt) orange juice
3 sprigs fresh rosemary
4 sprigs fresh thyme
2 fresh bay leaves
4 garlic cloves, peeled and flattened with the back of a knife
2 red peppers and 2 yellow peppers, cut into strips
2 red onions, peeled and cut into wedges
200g (7oz) cherry tomatoes on the vine

1 Make a few incisions in each lamb shank with a sharp knife and place in a bowl with the wine and orange juice. Using a pestle and mortar, bruise the herbs and add to the bowl, along with the garlic and peppers. Marinate for at least 1 hour, or overnight, covered in the fridge.
2 Heat the oven to 200 C, 180 C fan, 400 F, gas 6. Transfer the lamb to a large roasting tin and pour over the marinade, reserving the peppers. Cover with foil and roast for 1 hour.
3 Lift up the foil, turn and baste the shanks, and add the peppers and onions. Re-cover and roast for another hour, then remove the foil, crush the garlic into the juices and season. Add the tomatoes and cook, uncovered, for 10 minutes. Serve with mashed potatoes or wholegrain rice.
Per serving: 434 calories, 16g fat (0.3g saturated), 15g carbohydrate

✣ TO FREEZE
Don't add the tomatoes. Cool the lamb thoroughly; transfer to a freezerproof box and freeze. Thaw overnight in the fridge, then heat either on the hob or in the oven at 180 C, 160 C fan, 350 F, gas 4 until heated through. Add the tomatoes 10 minutes before serving.

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> Ideal for dining in with friends, melt-in-your-mouth lamb is also high in vitamin B, which looks after your nervous system

Lamb shanks with roasted vine tomatoes

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Try this

Use pork instead of beef sausages and substitute the basil with sage leaves

Sausage casserole

FEEL GOOD+

SAUSAGE KNOW-HOW

The perfect sausage should be plump, shiny and well packed (with no air bubbles), and won't shrink when cooked. Less is more when it comes to a sausage, which should contain at least 75 per cent meat, herbs, breadcrumbs and natural skins. Look for British free-range pork and beef options, and check their ingredients. Cheaper ones may contain less meat, more skin, gristle and saturated fat than a well-made sausage.

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Sausage casserole

Onions may help prevent blood clots, and therefore reduce the risk of heart attacks.

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 50 MINUTES
SERVES 6

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD / FREEZE

1tbsp olive oil
12 beef sausages
2 red onions, roughly sliced
2 red peppers, roughly sliced
1 yellow pepper, roughly sliced
2 garlic cloves, sliced
400g tin chopped tomatoes
450ml (15fl oz) beef stock
5 basil leaves
4 sprigs thyme
1 bay leaf
1tsp dried oregano
1tsp sugar
dash Worcestershire sauce
2tbsp flat-leaf parsley, chopped

1 In a casserole or large pan, heat the oil, brown the sausages, then remove and add the onions, peppers and garlic. Cook for 5 to 10 minutes to get a bit of colour.
2 Return the sausages to the pan and add the tomatoes, stock, herbs and sugar. Mix well and season with salt, pepper and a good splash of Worcestershire sauce.
3 Bring to a boil, then turn down the heat and simmer the casserole for 30 to 40 minutes, until the sausages and peppers are cooked through and the sauce has thickened. Remove the herbs and stir in the parsley, then serve. Or cool completely before freezing in a oiled Tupperware, or large freezer bags, then leave overnight in the fridge. When reheating – and ensure it comes back to the boil – you'll need to add a little cold water to the sauce, around 100ml (4fl oz).
Per serving: 325 calories, 22g fat (7g saturated), 15g carbohydrate

+ GREAT FOR VEGGIES

Hearty vegetable soup

Jam-packed with vegetables, this is really an antioxidant booster in a bowl.

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 45 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY/ PREPARE AHEAD / FREEZE

1tbsp olive oil
2 onions, finely chopped
½ large head celery, finely chopped
4 carrots, cut into very small chunks
2 garlic cloves, crushed
400g (14oz) floury potatoes, such as King Edward, cut into medium chunks
400g tin chopped tomatoes
½tsp caster sugar
2 bay leaves
600ml (1pt) vegetable stock
400g tin borlotti beans, drained, rinsed
150g (5oz) frozen peas
50g (2oz) strong Cheddar or Gruyère cheese, grated (optional)

1 Heat the oil in a large saucepan. Add the onions, celery, carrots and garlic, then cover and cook on a low heat for 10 minutes.
2 Add the potatoes, tomatoes, sugar and bay leaves. Fry for a couple of minutes and season. Add the stock, bring to the boil, cover and simmer for about 30 minutes, until the carrots are tender and the potatoes are just about to fall apart. Add the beans and peas, and cook for another couple of minutes. Serve scattered with the cheese.
Per serving: 360 calories, 10g fat (4g saturated), 48g carbohydrate

Hearty vegetable soup

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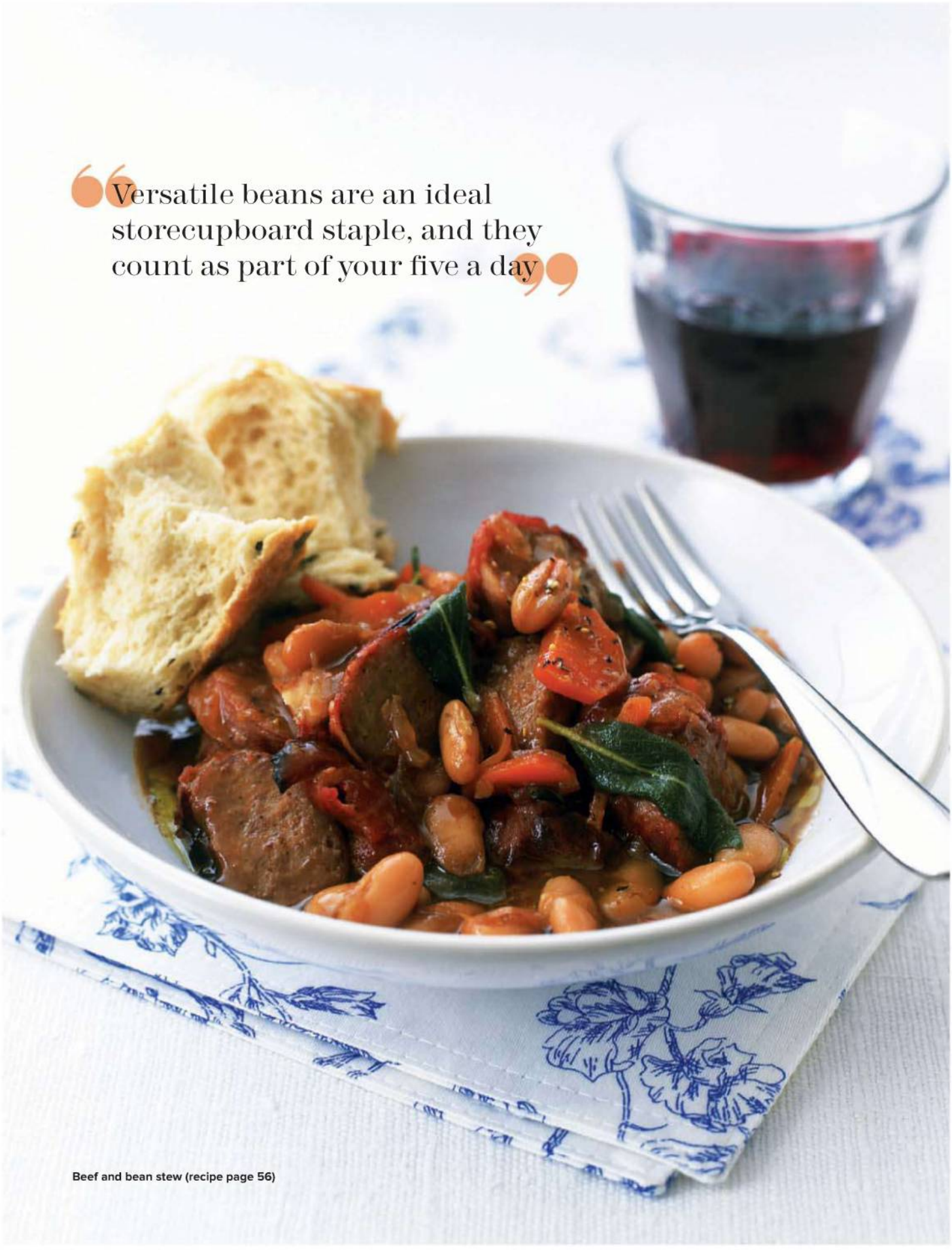

Beef and bean stew (recipe page 56)

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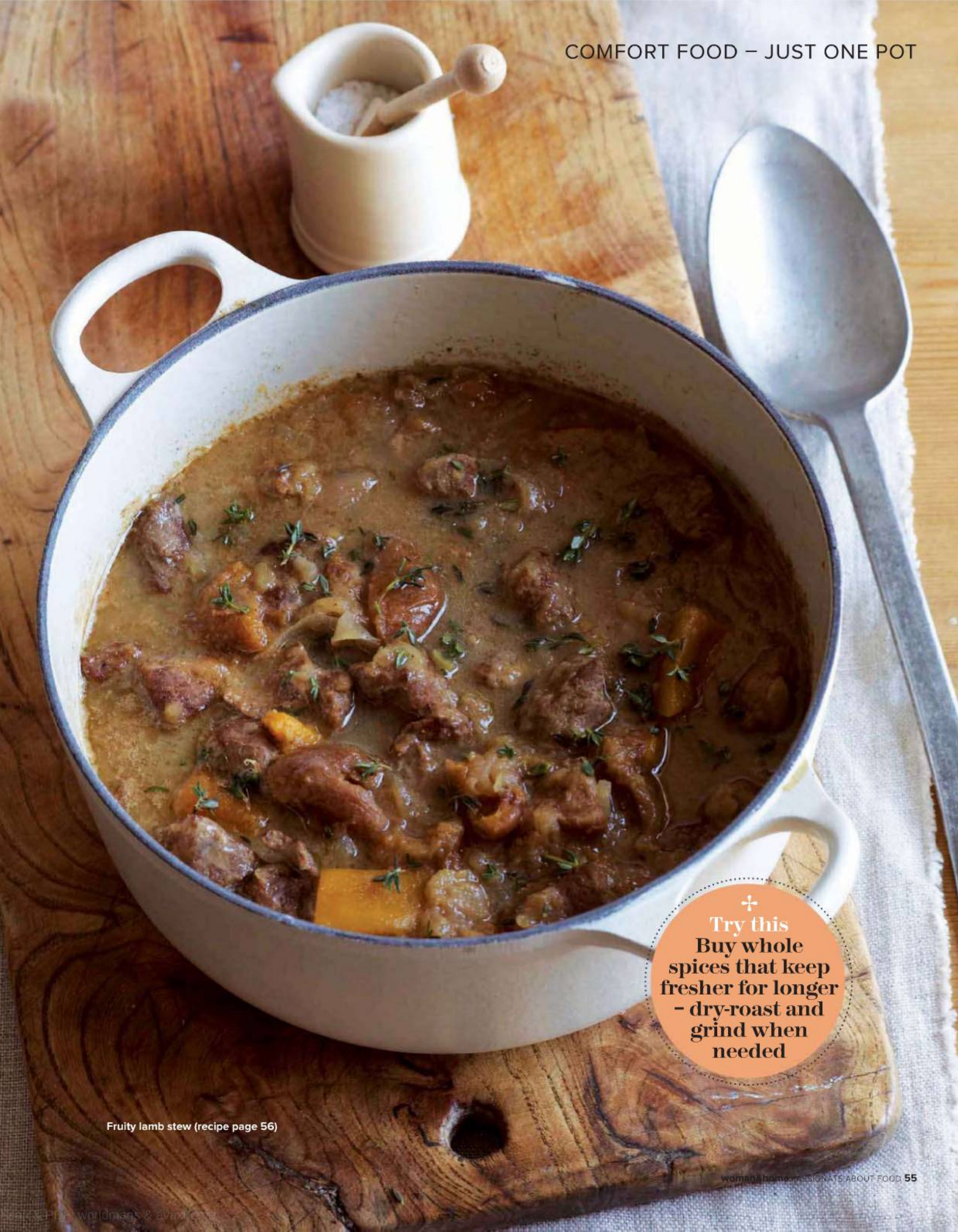

Try this
Buy whole spices that keep fresher for longer – dry-roast and grind when needed

Fruity lamb stew (recipe page 56)

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Cook's tip
If you can't find the jar of beans, mix 1 tin butter beans and 1 tin chopped tomatoes

Beef and bean stew

Use lean beef, a source of protein, vitamins, minerals and anti-ageing co-enzymes.

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR 10 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

a little oil
1 onion, finely chopped
1 carrot, sliced
500g (1lb 2oz) lean roasting beef, such as topside or silverside, cut into chunks
300ml (½pt) beef stock
2 x 280g jars Zanae Gigantes beans in tomato sauce (large butter beans in sauce, from good supermarkets)
6 sage leaves

1 Heat the oil in a casserole dish, then gently cook the onion and carrot for 5 minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon and set aside.
2 Add the beef and some seasoning and fry over a medium heat to brown. Return the vegetables to the pan, add the stock and bring to the boil. Simmer, then add both jars of beans with the sage. Cover and simmer very gently for around an hour, until the beef is just tender. Serve with chunks of crusty bread.
Per serving: 370 calories, 11g fat (3g saturated), 28g carbohydrate

SMART IDEA
You can use this recipe as a leftovers dish – just omit the stock, add the cooked beef and simmer the stew for around 15 minutes.

Fruity lamb stew

This dish will surreptitiously boost your five a day with dried fruit, a good source of iron.

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR 45 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD / FREEZE

700g (1lb 9oz) lean leg of lamb, cubed
1tbsp olive oil
1tsp ground cumin
1tsp ground coriander
½tsp ground cinnamon
¼tsp cayenne pepper
2 red onions, finely sliced
2 garlic cloves, crushed
2 Bramley apples, peeled, cored and chopped
50g (2oz) dried apricots, chopped
50g (2oz) dried mango
to serve:
200g (7oz) Puy lentils
400ml (14fl oz) vegetable stock
2tsp pomegranate molasses or balsamic vinegar
fresh thyme leaves

1 In a non-stick frying pan, brown the lamb in 2 batches in a little olive oil. At the end of the second batch, add the spices and toss well. Transfer to a lidded casserole dish and add a little cold water to the frying pan to deglaze it. Add to the casserole. Add a touch more olive oil and cook the onions until tender. Add the garlic and fry for a minute, then add to the meat.
2 Add the fruit and 600ml (1pt) water to the meat. Bring to the boil, then simmer gently, covered, until tender – around 1 hour 30 minutes.
3 Meanwhile, cook the lentils in the stock. Once tender, stir through the pomegranate molasses or balsamic vinegar and a little olive oil. Just before serving, stir some fresh thyme leaves through the casserole and serve with the lentils.
Per serving: 521 calories, 14g fat (4g saturated), 51g carbohydrate

GREAT FOR VEGGIES

Pumpkin and tomato chowder

Reduce your salt intake with fresh stock – slowly boil veg with herbs and spices.

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 25 MINUTES
SERVES 6

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD / FREEZE

750g (1lb 10oz) pumpkin or butternut squash, skinned and deseeded, 600g (1lb 5oz) prepared weight
1 Spanish onion, sliced
4 garlic cloves, crushed
1 carrot, sliced
1 potato, sliced
3 sprigs fresh thyme, destalked
700ml (1¼pt) hot vegetable stock
4tbsp tomato purée
2tsp smoked paprika
2tbsp extra virgin olive oil or 25g (1oz) butter
4tbsp thick natural yogurt, to serve

1 Cut the pumpkin flesh into 5cm (2in) chunks and put them in a large saucepan with the onion, garlic, carrot, potato and half the thyme. Pour in the stock and bring to the boil. Cover, reduce to a simmer and cook undisturbed for 20 minutes.
2 When the vegetables are tender, pour the pan contents into a blender or food processor in 2 batches, adding the tomato purée, paprika and oil or butter. Blitz to a rough, thick purée. Return the soup to a clean pan and simmer for 2 minutes. Serve hot with a swirl of thick yogurt and a sprinkling of the remaining thyme on top.
Per serving: 142 calories, 5g fat (1g saturated), 20g carbohydrate

FEEL GOOD+

PUMPKIN KNOW-HOW
A good source of vitamin E, pumpkin and butternut squash also contain beta-carotene, which the body converts to vitamin A. Save the seeds – they're rich in potassium, magnesium and zinc, required by the body's immune system.

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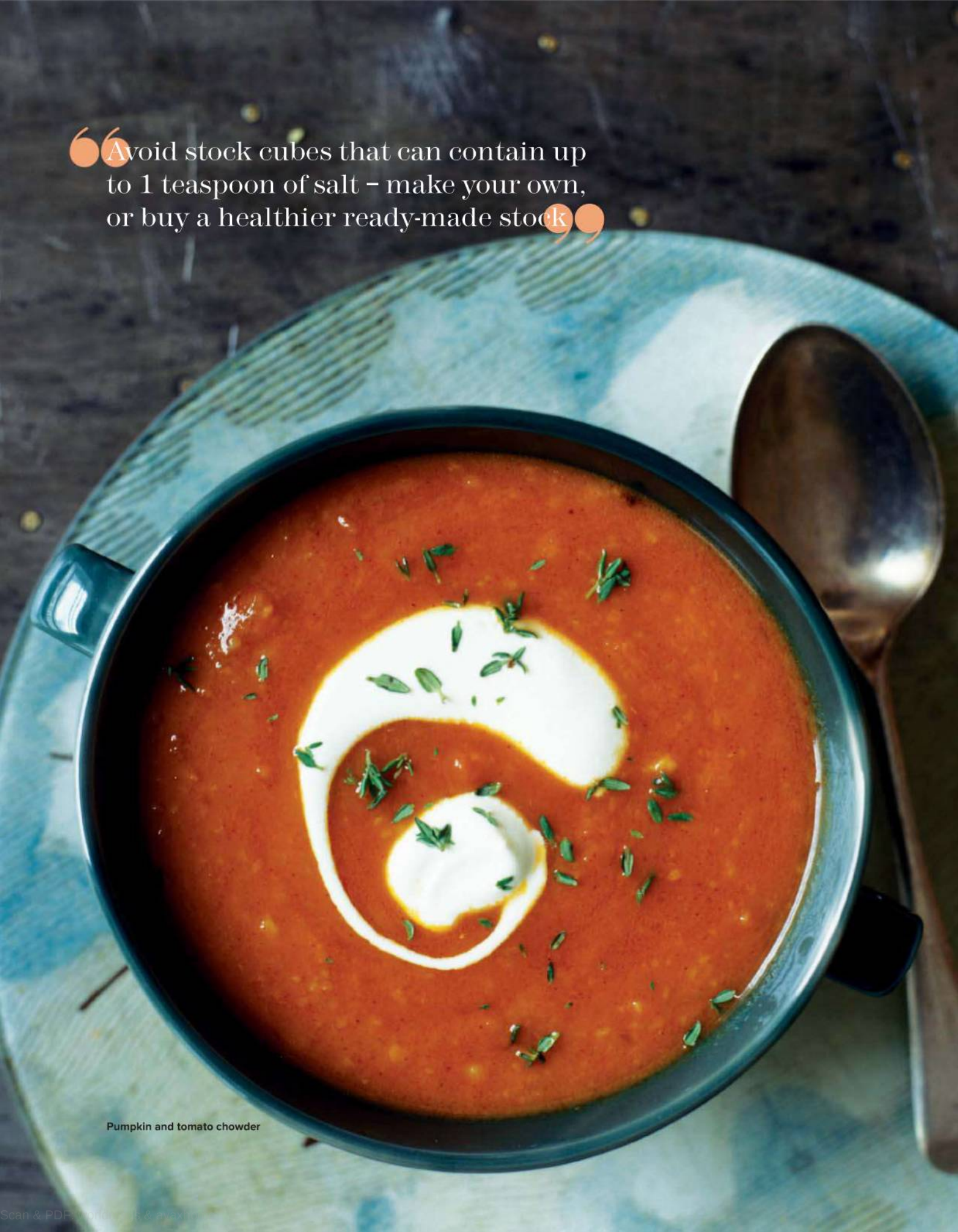

> Avoid stock cubes that can contain up to 1 teaspoon of salt – make your own, or buy a healthier ready-made stock

Pumpkin and tomato chowder

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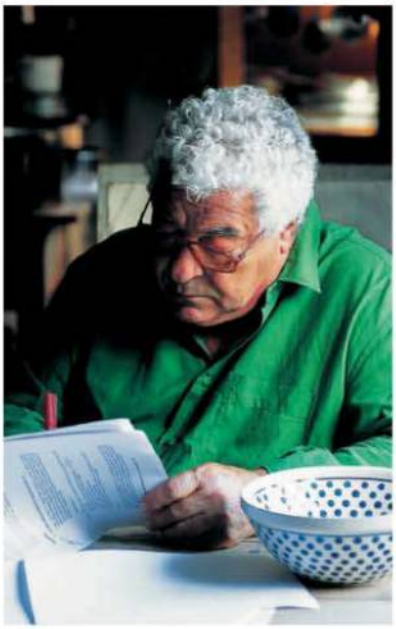


"THE MOST SIGNIFICANT BIT OF KNOWLEDGE YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ITALIAN FOOD," SAYS ANTONIO, "IS THAT IT IS ALWAYS VERY SIMPLE, AND ALWAYS USES THE BEST INGREDIENTS." WITH THAT IN MIND, USE FRESH, GOOD-QUALITY STOCK AND YOU'LL REDUCE YOUR SALT INTAKE. ASK YOUR BUTCHER TO MINCE LEAN, FREE-RANGE PORK FOR YOU – THERE'LL BE NO HIDDEN RIND OR GRISTLE, JUST MEAT, PLUS IT'LL HAVE A FAR LOWER FAT INTAKE THAN PREPARED MINCED MEAT.

> Lentils are a good source of selenium, which is important for the functioning of the body's immune system. You'll literally be eating yourself to good health

ANTONIO CARLUCCIO'S

Umbrian lentil and home-made sausage stew (Salsicce fatte a mano con lenticchie)

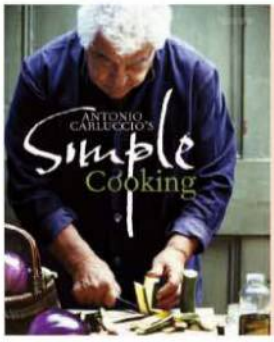
This dish is truly wonderful when using the fresh sausages made by the local Norcian master butchers [in Umbria], who are known as norcini. As they may be difficult to find, I suggest making the sausages from scratch instead – it's not too complicated, and it is well worth it. You can get Castelluccio lentils, the Italian Puy lentils, in a good delicatessen.

PREPARATION TIME: 30 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 40 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

2 garlic cloves, peeled and squashed
50g (2oz) sun-dried tomatoes, cut into strips
7tbsp extra virgin olive oil
250g (9oz) Castelluccio lentils
450ml (15fl oz) chicken stock
2 celery sticks, with leaves, chopped
for the sausages:
500g (1lb 2oz) minced pork
50ml (2fl oz) strong red wine
1tsp fennel seeds
1 mild chilli, finely chopped
1tsp rosemary, chopped

1 For the lentils, fry the garlic and the sun-dried tomatoes in 6tbsp of the olive oil for a few minutes in a large pan. When the garlic starts to turn pale golden, add the lentils, stock and celery, and cook for 30 minutes or until the lentils are soft. Cover and keep warm over a low heat.
2 Meanwhile, in a medium-sized bowl, mix the sausage ingredients together well and season with salt and pepper. Take a handful of mince and roll it into a sausage shape, 7.5cm (3in) long and 3cm (1¼in) in diameter. Wrap tightly in a piece of foil, closing by turning the ends as you would a sweet.
3 Bring a large pan of water to the boil. Poach the sausages in the boiling water until they pop up to the surface, about 2 to 3 minutes. Leave to cool a little, then take off the foil. This poaching should ensure that the sausages hold together.
4 Moisten the sausages with the remaining olive oil, then fry or grill (or roast) until golden on all sides, about 5 minutes.
5 Add the sausages to the warm lentils, and allow to cook gently together for 5 minutes. Eat with bread or a few boiled potatoes.
Per serving: 635 calories, 36g fat (8g saturated), 31g carbohydrate



ANTONIO CARLUCCIO'S SIMPLE COOKING (QUADRILLE, £20) One of Italy's great food ambassadors, Antonio's latest book is a coming together of all the "secrets" that he has learned over his 50 years in food. He wants to instill in his readers the simple pleasure of cooking good fresh food, and to inspire novice cooks with confidence and a repertoire of reliable dishes for all occasions. From antipasti and pasta to fish, meat and more, the recipes in the book are all easy to cook, and are perfect for those with little experience or who are short of time.

MAIN PHOTOGRAPH ALASTAIR HENDY

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Antonio Carluccio's Umbrian lentil and home-made sausage stew

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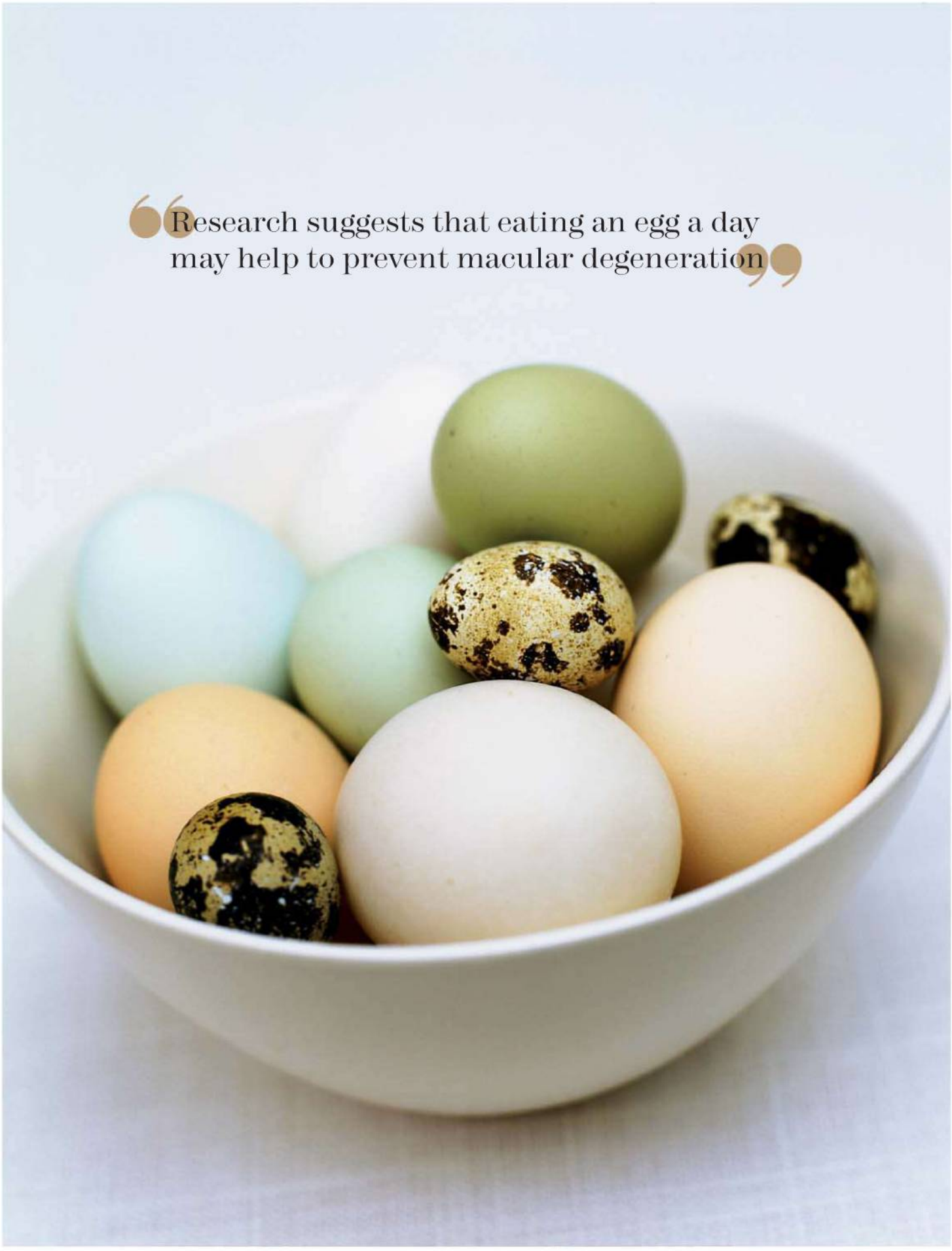

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A good egg

Low calorie, high protein and super speedy to cook, eggs are the ultimate fast food and, contrary to previous belief, extremely good for you

Eggs are an essential part of almost everyone's diet whether they form the main ingredient in a meal, or hide in a sauce, pudding or cake. There are few of us who wouldn't be seduced by a runny-yolked poached egg crowned with sharp, buttery hollandaise and, as for home-made mayonnaise, crisp meringues, or a velvety smooth crème brûlée, there really isn't much that the humble egg can't turn its hand to.

Eggs have been given a bad press in recent years – criticised for their high cholesterol content, with people being warned that eating too many can potentially increase the risk of heart disease. However, this has since been disproved, and while a healthy diet is always a varied one, there is no reason to limit your consumption of eggs. There is no recommended limit on how many eggs people can eat as part of a healthy, balanced diet.

In terms of health benefits, the egg has a lot going for it:

- An incredibly high source of protein, it will fill you up without piling on the calories, and so reduces the urge to snack in-between meals. A medium egg contains less than 80 calories – so if you have two for breakfast, that's just 160 calories, which will keep you full up until lunch time!
- An egg contains all nine essential amino acids – these increase the release of the human growth hormone and stop muscle tissue breaking down during exercise.
- They contain high levels of vitamin B12, which is needed for the formation of red blood cells and the maintenance of the central nervous system.
- They are rich sources of vitamins A and D, important for the maintenance of the immune system, as well as for healthy bones, skin and teeth.

As well as the usual recipes involving hens' eggs, there are many other varieties on the market, which all have culinary uses.

QUAILS' EGGS

Tiny brown speckled quails' eggs are almost too pretty to peel. When boiled they make excellent additions to fish salads, or on the half shell with flavoured sea salt to dip them into for a drinks party. If you're feeling particularly cheffy, you can poach them and serve mini eggs benedict, or bacon and egg canapés – fiddly, but the result is well worth it.

DUCK EGGS

Larger than hens' eggs, and usually an off-white colour, duck eggs work very well in most baking, although for some reason we've found they don't make meringues! They have a stronger flavour than hens' eggs, which some love and others find slightly unpalatable. Incredibly fashionable in restaurants right now, one of our favourite ways to eat them is poached on top of a bubble and squeak cake, with some crisp Parma ham.

OSTRICH EGGS

Only available from selected retailers, these eggs can weigh in at a whopping 1.5kg (3lb 6oz). They're great for scrambled eggs if you're feeding a large crowd, and have a light flavour and texture, less "eggy" than a hen's egg.

SOME EGGY ADVICE

We've learned certain techniques over years in the kitchen that make cooking with eggs foolproof. Here are our favourites:

- When hard boiling eggs to be eaten cold, run them under cold water for a few minutes as soon as they come out of the pan. This will not only stop them from becoming overcooked, it will also prevent the ugly brown ring forming around the yolk.
- If you want a quick cheat for bought mayonnaise, stir a fresh yolk through it, with a good dollop of Dijon mustard. It will instantly taste home-made!
- When making cakes, your eggs should always be at the same temperature as the butter (preferably room temperature). This will help to stop the mixture curdling.
- Eggs for poaching should not only be very fresh, but also fridge cold. It helps the white stay together when dropped in the water.
- When making meringues, it's best to use egg whites which are a couple of weeks old. Fresh eggs don't whip up as well and will result in a much looser meringue mixture.

Points to remember...

- **It goes without saying that all eggs should be free range and, preferably, organic. Apart from the obvious welfare issues, cage eggs also lack both colour and flavour.**
- **When cooking for young children, pregnant women or much older people, it's important that you cook any eggs completely through. Sauces such as hollandaise and mayonnaise, where the egg is left partially cooked or raw, are also best avoided. You can however, buy pasteurised egg in some supermarkets, which is safe to use.**
- **Test to see if your eggs are fresh by dropping them into a jug of cold water. A fresh egg will sink, a stale one will float.**

For more information on health and wellbeing, visit womanandhome.com.

WORDS REBECCA SMITH

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Around the world

Once the currency of ancient times, spices are invaluable for their ability to quickly and easily transport you to an exotic location. Whether it's an Asian stir-fry perfumed with star anise, or chilli powder giving a Mexican quesadilla some bite, here's a range of inspiring and healthy international recipes that will take your taste buds on a culinary exploration of the globe

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PHOTOGRAPH RICHARD JUNG PROP STYLING SUE ROWLANDS

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Squid and ginger stir-fry

Squid and ginger stir-fry

Low-fat squid and digestion-aiding ginger combine beautifully in this delectable dish.

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES, PLUS MARINATING
COOKING TIME: 10 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY

500g (1lb 2oz) whole squid (about 6 small or 2 large), cleaned
2tbsp fresh ginger, freshly grated
4 garlic cloves, shredded
juice 2 limes
2 star-anise pods or a 5cm (2in) cinnamon stick
3tbsp oil
500g pack stir-fry vegetables (we used one with bean sprouts, Chinese leaves, baby asparagus and baby pak choi, or your own choice, sliced if needed)
sesame seeds, to serve

1 Slice the body of the squid into rings and the tentacle sections into bite-sized chunks. Place in a bowl with the ginger, garlic and lime juice, and leave to marinate for 10 minutes.
2 In a pestle and mortar, pound the spices with some salt and freshly ground black pepper to a grit, then stir this into the marinade.
3 Heat a wok or large non-stick frying pan until very hot. Add the oil and squid, drained of its liquid. Stir and toss over a high heat for 1½ minutes. Then toss in the sprouts and leaves. Mix everything together and add the marinade. Cover and cook for 2 minutes more or until the vegetables are wilted, but not soft. Serve in shallow bowls with rice noodles, if liked, and sprinkled with sesame seeds.
Per serving: 217 calories, 12g fat (2g saturated), 4g carbohydrate

Keralan green chicken curry

If you feel like you're coming down with a cold, add decongesting chillies to a dish.

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 30 MINUTES
SERVES 8

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD / FREEZE

1, 2 or 3 large green chillies (depending on your heat preference), deseeded and chopped
½tsp each turmeric, ground coriander and cinnamon
2.5cm (1in) piece fresh root ginger, peeled and grated
2 garlic cloves
3tbsp flavourless oil, such as groundnut
10 curry leaves
2 cloves
2 onions, sliced
12 skinless free-range chicken thigh fillets, cut into large chunks
200ml (7fl oz) reduced-fat coconut milk
large bunch fresh coriander
juice 1 lime

1 In a pestle and mortar, pound together the chillies, turmeric, coriander, cinnamon, ginger and garlic with a pinch of salt and a spoonful of water.
2 Heat the oil in a large sauté pan or wok, then fry the curry leaves for a minute. Now add the fresh paste and stir well, cooking the spices. Stir in the cloves and onions and cook over a low heat for 10 minutes.
3 Add the chicken and stir well, so that it just colours. Add the coconut milk and gently simmer until the chicken is cooked through, about 20 minutes. If the sauce evaporates too quickly, turn it down further and add a little more water. Taste for seasoning; it will probably need salt.
4 To serve, roughly chop the coriander and stir through with the lime juice.
If freezing, thaw thoroughly, then reheat fully before serving.
Per serving: 200 calories, 10g fat (4g saturated), 4g carbohydrate

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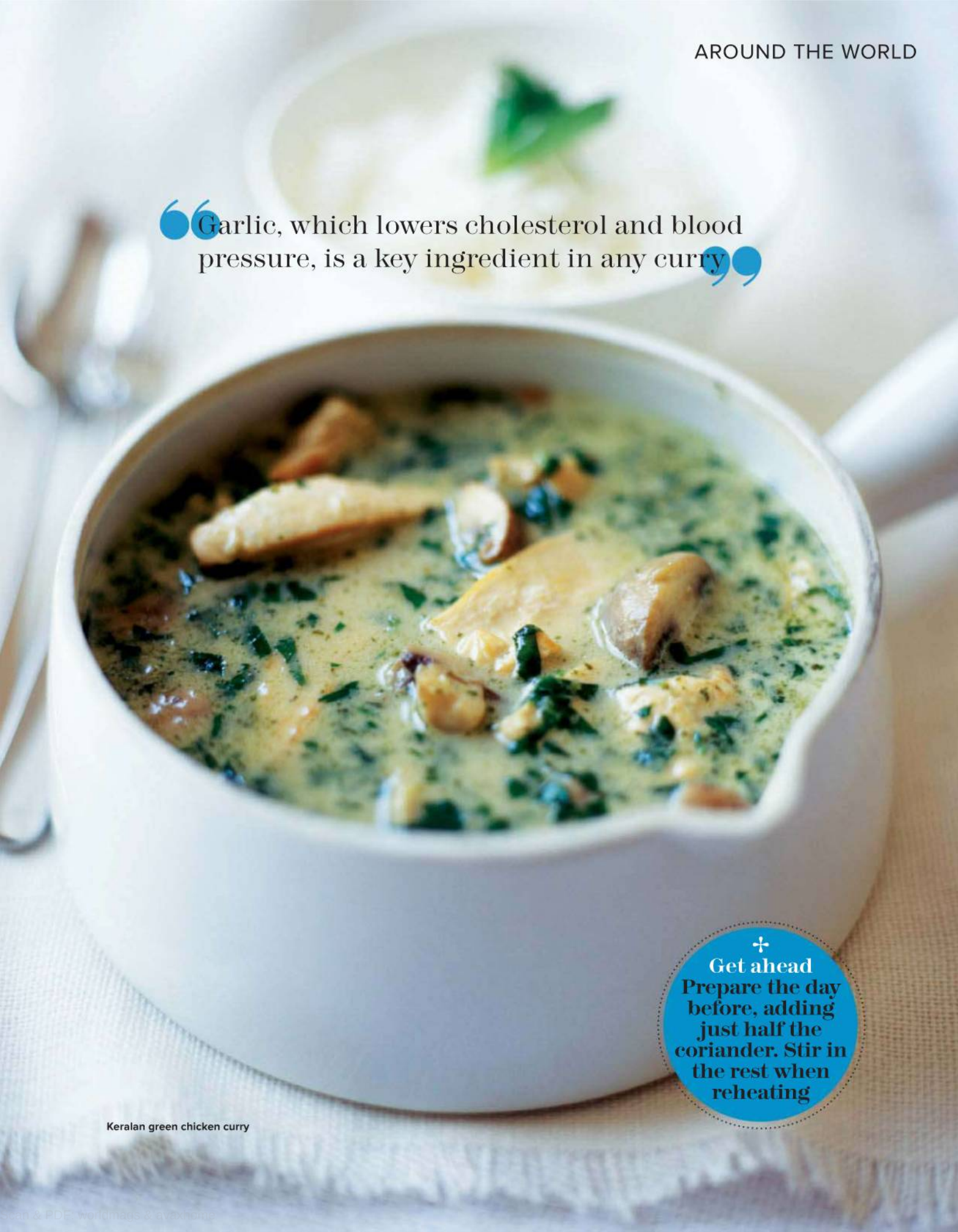

> Garlic, which lowers cholesterol and blood pressure, is a key ingredient in any curry

Get ahead
Prepare the day before, adding just half the coriander. Stir in the rest when reheating

Keralan green chicken curry

> Be energised by a satisfying pasta meal that provides you with slow-release carbohydrates

Smart idea
If you're watching your fat intake, simply go easy on the Parmesan

Real Italian carbonara

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Real Italian carbonara

Authentic carbonara sauce contains no cream. This dish is high protein and filling.

PREPARATION TIME: 5 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 12 MINUTES
SERVES 2

EASY

200g (7oz) spaghetti
140g pack English smoked bacon lardons
2 garlic cloves, chopped
50g (2oz) Parmesan cheese, grated, plus extra to serve, if you like
2 free-range egg yolks and 1 whole free-range egg, beaten
handful basil or flat-leaf parsley, to serve

1 Cook the spaghetti according to the pack instructions. While it's cooking, heat a non-stick frying pan and, when very hot, add the lardons. Cook until crisp, remove from the heat, throw in the garlic, stir and remove from the pan immediately to prevent the garlic burning. Drain on kitchen paper.
2 Mix the Parmesan into the egg and season with pepper. When the pasta is cooked, drain thoroughly, return to the pan off the heat and stir through the egg. The heat from the pasta should cook the egg without curdling it. Stir through the bacon and the parsley and serve immediately, with a scattering of Parmesan. For a veggie version, try this carbonara with sautéed mushrooms or mixed green veg.
Per serving: 755 calories, 33g fat (13g saturated), 74g carbohydrate

FEEL GOOD+

PASTA KNOW-HOW

Pasta's slow-release starches are broken down by the body and can be used to build up energy stores or glycogen. This is why many athletes eat pasta while preparing for endurance events, such as marathons. Contrary to popular belief, pasta isn't fattening, it's the creamy sauces that accompany it that are the problem. However, cream-free or served with a simple tomato sauce, it can be part of a weight-loss diet.

Roast vegetable lasagne

+ GREAT FOR VEGGIES

Roast vegetable lasagne

The perfect dish for allergy sufferers, it's both dairy and gluten free!

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR 30 MINUTES
SERVES 8

PREPARE AHEAD

200g pack gluten-free (rice and corn) lasagne
35g (1¼oz) dairy-free Florentino Parmazano or dairy-free Cheddar-style cheese, grated
for the filling:
2 garlic cloves, left whole
1 red onion, cut into wedges
2 heads fennel, trimmed, cut into wedges
1 red and 1 yellow pepper, deseeded and cut into chunks
2 large courgettes, cut into thick slices
few sprigs thyme, or a good 1tsp dried mixed herbs
3tbsp olive oil
2tsp gluten-free vegetable bouillon
85g (3½oz) red lentils
for the cheese sauce:
50g (2oz) dairy-free soya spread
25g (1oz) wheat-free flour mixed with 25g (1oz) pure cornflour
1tsp gluten-free mustard powder
1 litre (1¾pt) dairy-free soya milk
25g (1oz) dairy-free Cheddar-style cheese, grated
grated nutmeg

1 Heat the oven to 220 C, 200 C fan, 425 F, gas 7. Mix all the vegetables for the filling in a large roasting tin with the herbs, oil and plenty of seasoning. Roast for about 25 minutes, then turn them and roast for another 20 minutes.
2 Meanwhile, dissolve the bouillon in 600ml (1pt) boiling water. Add the lentils; leave to soak for 30 minutes. Squeeze the roasted garlic on to the roasted vegetables. Stir the lentils and stock into the roasting tin.
3 To make the sauce, melt the spread in a saucepan, add the flour, cornflour and mustard and cook for 1 minute. Gradually stir in the soya milk a little at a time. Stir in the cheese, bring to the boil and boil for a few minutes. Whisk it well, but don't worry too much about little lumps. Season with salt, pepper and nutmeg.
4 Spread a third of the lentil filling over the base of a large ovenproof dish. Cover with a layer of lasagne (4 to 5 sheets) and spread half the cheese sauce over the top. Cover with another third of the filling, another layer of pasta, the last of the filling, then the remaining sauce. Sprinkle with the cheese. Bake for 45 minutes until browned. Leave for 10 minutes to settle before serving. Serve the lasagne with green vegetables or a salad.
Per serving: 323 calories, 15g fat (3g saturated), 36g carbohydrate

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French onion soup

French onion soup

Use a mature Cheddar – you'll only need a little, so it will keep the fat intake down.

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR 20 MINUTES
SERVES 8

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD / FREEZE

25g (1oz) butter
5 onions, peeled and sliced
1tbsp plain flour
1 small glass dry white wine
1.2 litres (2pt) beef stock
1tbsp Worcestershire sauce
16 slices baguette
100g (4oz) mature Cheddar or Gruyère, grated

1 Melt the butter in a large saucepan, then add the sliced onions and fry over a low heat for 25 to 30 minutes.
2 Stir in the the flour and the glass of wine, and allow the mixture to reduce before adding the beef stock. Simmer for 20 minutes, then add the Worcestershire sauce and simmer for another 20 minutes.
3 Meanwhile, toast slices of the French bread. Spoon the soup into bowls, then sit the bread on top of the soup (2 slices per bowl) and top with the grated cheese. Place the bowls of soup under a hot grill until the cheese melts, then serve with extra bread on the side, if needed.
Per serving: 270 calories, 9g fat (5g saturated), 34g carbohydrate

Berber tagine

This lamb is not only tasty, it also provides a good source of zinc, iron and B vitamins.

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR
SERVES 6 TO 8

PREPARE AHEAD / FREEZE

1kg (2lb 4oz) boneless lamb, cut into 4cm (1½in) cubes
4tbsp extra virgin olive oil
3 red onions, quartered
4 garlic cloves, chopped
200g (7oz) green lentils, unsoaked
300g (10oz) carrots, sliced
300g (10oz) small potatoes
2tsp dried oregano or marjoram
1 lemon, quartered
2 pinches saffron
1tsp harissa paste

1 Put the lamb and oil in a large, flameproof casserole or tagine and cook over a high heat for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally until the meat is firm, lightly coloured and fragrant. Remove the meat from the pan.
2 Add the onions, garlic, lentils, carrots, potatoes and 600ml (1pt) boiling water, and bring to a rapid boil. Pile the lamb on top of the vegetables, but don't stir. Scatter in the dried herbs, squeeze in the juice from the lemon quarters and then add the squeezed quarters. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat to very low, cover and simmer gently for 40 minutes.
3 Grind the saffron and 1tsp rock salt to a powder in a pestle and mortar, stir in a little cooking liquid and add the mixture to the pan, along with the harissa. Cover and cook for a final 10 to 15 minutes. Serve garnished with fresh mint, and flat bread on the side.
Per serving: 483-370 calories, 22-16g fat (7-5g saturated), 33-25g carbohydrate

+ SAFFRON KNOW-HOW
A little saffron goes a long way. Crush the strands lightly, steep in a little warm water before adding to paella or risottos. Or transform mashed potatoes by adding a pinch to the cooking water.

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> Lentils are high in fibre, so will help you to maintain a healthy digestive system

Get ahead
This North African casserole tastes even better when made the day before

Berber tagine

> Swap white basmati for brown – it cooks for longer but is higher in fibre

Super-quick chicken tikka

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Try this
A couple of tablespoons of fresh mint gives extra zing to the tikka

Super-quick chicken tikka

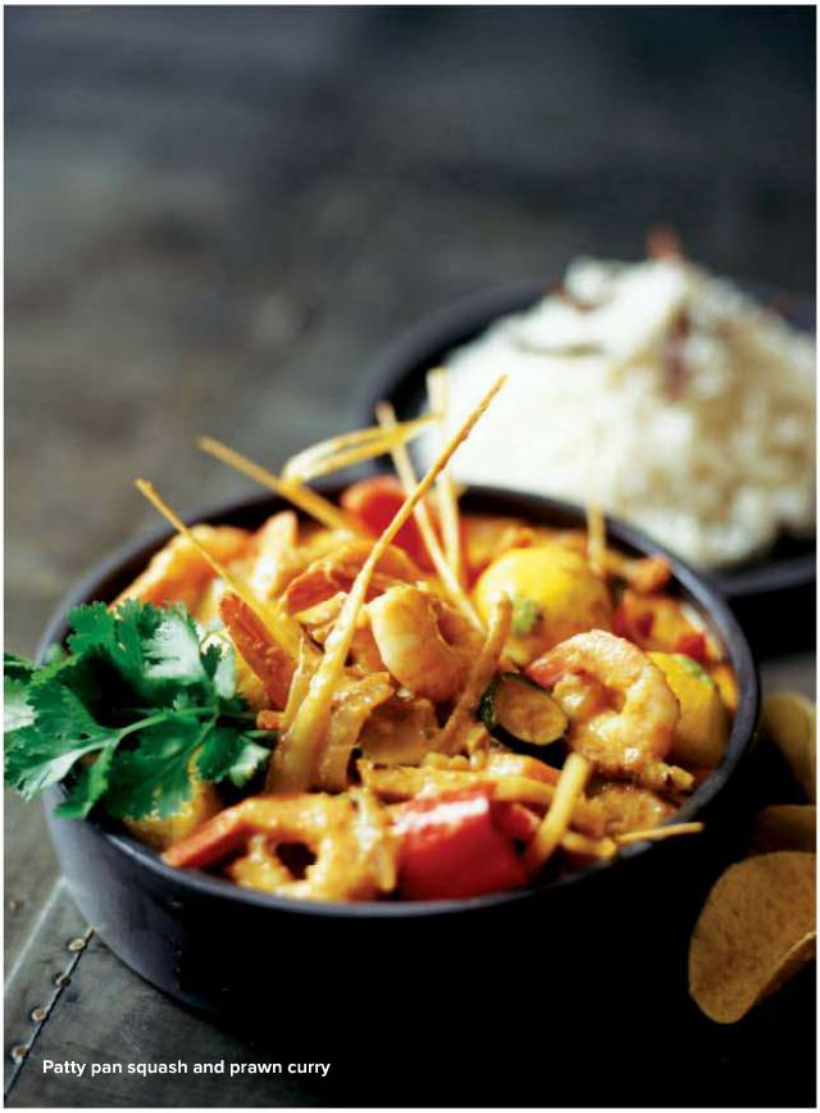
Blast the myth that curry is a fatty food by using a good curry paste and lean meat.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 25 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

1tsp oil
2 onions, roughly chopped
4 free-range chicken breasts, cut into large chunks
2tbsp tikka curry paste (we used Patak's)
400g tin chopped tomatoes
3tbsp Greek yogurt, plus extra to serve
large handful coriander leaves, chopped, to serve

1 Heat the oil in a sauté pan and fry the onions for a couple of minutes, until slightly softened. Season the chicken and add to the pan, turning occasionally to brown all over.
2 Add the curry paste to the pan, and cook for a couple of minutes. Add the tomatoes and cook for a further 5 to 8 minutes. Stir through the yogurt and cook until the curry starts to bubble. Check the seasoning and serve with a dollop of yogurt on top and a good scattering of coriander. Dish this curry up and serve with basmati rice, cooked with a cinnamon stick, plus poppadoms and a tomato and onion salad.
Per serving: 243 calories, 7g fat (2g saturated), 9g carbohydrate



Patty pan squash and prawn curry

Patty pan squash and prawn curry

Warming ginger adds depth of flavour to a dish, while aiding digestion and circulation.

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 20 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

2tbsp chilli or groundnut oil
4 garlic cloves, sliced
1 onion, sliced
16 patty pan squashes, about 450g (1lb)
1 carrot, sliced diagonally
1 long sweet red pepper, sliced diagonally
2 baby courgettes, sliced diagonally
2tbsp Thai-style red curry paste
450ml tin coconut milk
2 bulbs lemongrass, halved lengthways
50g (2oz) fresh ginger, peeled and shredded
250g (9oz) raw king prawn tails, shelled
handful fresh coriander leaves, torn

1 Heat the oil with the garlic and onion until sizzling. Add the squash, carrot, red pepper and courgettes and sauté for 2 minutes. Add the curry paste, stir over a high heat for 1 minute, then add the coconut milk, lemongrass and ginger.
2 Return to a simmer, cover and cook for 8 minutes or until the vegetables are cooked. Season to taste. Add the prawns, cover and cook for 5 minutes, until they turn opaque and are firm. Ladle into bowls and sprinkle with the coriander. Serve with basmati rice and prawn crackers.
Per serving: 375 calories, 28g fat (18g saturated), 14g carbohydrate

RECIPE KNOW-HOW
You could use cooked prawns in this dish, just reduce the cooking time to 2 minutes. Add interest to plain rice, by cooking it with ½tsp tumeric.

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Quesadillas with spring onions and jalapeños

✢ GREAT FOR VEGGIES

Quesadillas with spring onions and jalapeños

Two vine tomatoes equals one of your five a day, so tuck into this vibrant salsa.

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 10 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY

8 flour tortillas
100g (4oz) smoked cheese, coarsely grated
100g (4oz) Caerphilly cheese, crumbled
1 bunch spring onions, finely chopped
3tbsp jalapeños, sliced
for the salsa:
2tbsp tinned kidney or black-eye beans, drained, rinsed and roughly chopped
½ red onion, finely chopped
3 ripe tomatoes, chopped
½ red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
juice ½ lime

1 Heat a ridged griddle pan or grill. Meanwhile, make the salsa by mixing together the kidney or black-eye beans, the onion, tomatoes, chilli and lime juice.
2 To make the quesadillas, take 4 tortillas and scatter over both the cheeses. Top with the chopped spring onions and sliced jalapeños.
3 Cover the tortilla filling with another tortilla. Place 1 quesadilla at a time on the griddle pan on the hob, or on a grill pan under the grill, and cook for 1 to 2 minutes, then flip over and cook the other side for 1 minute. Keep warm while you cook the remaining quesadillas. Cut into quarters and serve immediately with the salsa in a separate bowl.
Per serving: 600 calories, 19g fat (11g saturated), 90g carbohydrate

✢ Cook's tip
Dairy-allergy sufferers can use silken tofu to make ice cream or cheesecake

✢ GREAT FOR VEGGIES

Vegetarian chilli

Tofu is low-fat and high in protein – you can also use minced Quorn here.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 15 MINUTES
SERVES 8

EASY

450g (1lb) tofu, crumbled
1tbsp soy sauce
1 onion, chopped
½ green pepper, chopped
2 garlic cloves, crushed
2tbsp rapeseed oil
400g tin kidney beans, drained and rinsed
450ml (15fl oz) tomato passata
225ml (8fl oz) vegetable stock
1tsp chilli powder (more if you like it hot!)
drizzle of soya yogurt, to serve
handful fresh coriander, chopped

1 Stir together the crumbled tofu and soy sauce in a large bowl.
2 In a large pan, sauté the onion, green pepper and garlic in the oil. Add the tofu and continue cooking until it is browned.
3 Add the beans, passata, vegetable stock and chilli powder. Mix thoroughly. Bring to the boil. Serve in deep bowls with a spoonful of soya yogurt and the coriander sprinkled over.
Per serving: 156 calories, 7g fat (1g saturated), 13g carbohydrate

✢ RECIPE KNOW-HOW
You can bake, grill, stir-fry or even barbecue firm tofu. Bland when plain, it benefits from a marinade or spices, from which it absorbs flavours.

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> Rapeseed oil is a monounsaturated oil and omega-3 source, which helps protect against heart disease

Vegetarian chilli

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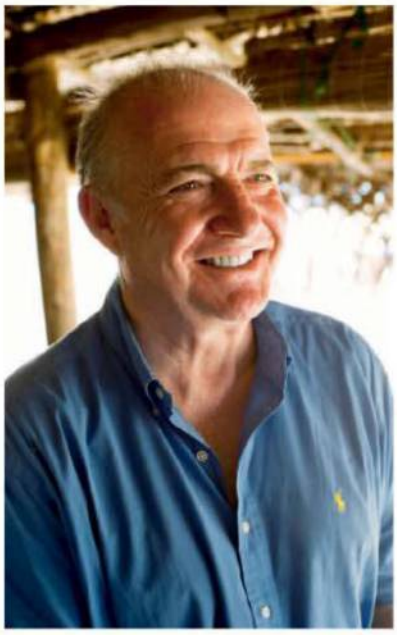


"VIETNAMESE FOOD IS SIMILAR TO THAI AND CAMBODIAN IN THE SENSE THAT THE MOST COMMON FLAVOURING INGREDIENTS ARE LIME JUICE AND LIME LEAVES, LEMONGRASS, FISH SAUCE, PALM SUGAR AND CHILLI, BUT VIETNAM'S INFLUENCES ARE MUCH MORE CHINESE," RICK EXPLAINS. RICH WITH SPICY FLAVOURS, THIS CLASSIC VIETNAMESE DISH IS PRETTY LOW-CALORIE AND HEALTHY TOO, WITH BEAN SPROUTS PROVIDING VITAMINS C AND B COMPLEX, AND MINT AIDING DIGESTION.

RICK STEIN'S

Fresh spring rolls (Nem cuon)

These Vietnamese spring rolls are made with soft rice papers, wrapped around a filling of fresh herbs, salad, cooked meat and seafood. The object here is to get contrasts of texture and many fresh flavours in the soft-wrapped roll. There are endless combinations, but I find this mixture of prawns and cooked pork, together with bean sprouts, tender vermicelli noodles, mint, Thai sweet basil and garlic chives, to be perfect.

PREPARATION TIME: 40 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 5 MINUTES
SERVES 4 (MAKES 8 ROLLS)

✓ **EASY**

150g (5oz) piece of Vietnamese cooked belly pork, skin removed (see below)
25g (1oz) dried rice vermicelli noodles
8 x 22cm (8¾in) extra-thin dried Vietnamese ripe papers (banh trang)
16 chives (garlic chives if possible)
leaves from 2 to 3 sprigs fresh mint and 2 to 3 sprigs Thai sweet basil
8 large cooked, peeled prawns, halved lengthways
50g (2oz) fresh bean sprouts
100g (4oz) soft, hothouse lettuce leaves, washed and dried
Vietnamese dipping sauce (nuoc cham), to serve (see below)

1 Cut the piece of cooked belly pork across into very thin slices. Cover and set aside. Bring a pan of unsalted water to the boil. Add the vermicelli noodles, remove from the heat and leave to soak for 2 minutes or until just tender. Drain and rinse in cold water to prevent them from cooking any further. Set aside with the pork. Mix the ingredients for the nuoc cham dipping sauce together (see below) and divide between 4 dipping saucers.

2 To assemble the spring rolls, have all the filling ingredients ready and to hand. Dip 1 rice paper into a shallow dish of cold water and leave to soften for about 1 minute, then remove and lay on a wet tea towel. In the centre of the paper arrange 2 crossed chives, followed by small amounts of the mint leaves, basil leaves, 2 prawn halves, noodles, bean sprouts, pork and lettuce in layers. Fold the edge of the paper closest to you over the filling, fold in the sides and then roll up away from you to secure everything in a neat parcel. Set the assembled roll aside on 1 half of another damp tea towel, and cover with the other half, to prevent it drying out.

3 Repeat this process with the remaining papers, distributing the ingredients equally between them and setting them aside under the folded damp tea towel. When they are all made, arrange them on a serving platter and serve with the nuoc cham for dipping.

Per serving: 190 calories, 9g fat (3g saturated), 13g carbohydrate

Vietnamese dipping sauce (Nuoc cham)

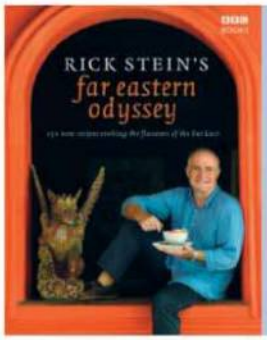
2tbsp lime juice
2tbsp fish sauce
1tbsp sugar
1tsp fresh ginger, very finely chopped
1 red bird's eye chilli, thinly sliced
1 garlic clove, very finely chopped

Mix the ingredients with 2tbsp water.

Vietnamese cooked belly pork

500g (1lb 2oz) boneless belly pork in one piece, skin left unscored

Put the pork into a pan with 1 litre (1¾pt) cold water and 2tsp salt. Bring to the boil, cover and leave to simmer very gently for 1 hour. Lift out and allow to cool before using. Any leftovers will freeze well.



RICK STEIN'S FAR EASTERN ODYSSEY
(BBC BOOKS, £25)
This book accompanied the chef's TV series of the same name, during which he visited Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, Bali, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. The book recounts authentic recipes, such as Vietnamese beef noodle soup and Singapore laksa, with stunning photography evoking the magic of bustling markets and the aromatic steam of a Far Eastern kitchen.

MAIN PHOTOGRAPH JAMES MURPHY

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Rick Stein's Fresh spring rolls

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Tinned fish, a healthy choice

Don't turn up your nose at tinned fish! If you are careful to buy quality, it's a convenient way to have healthy and delicious food to hand in the storecupboard

HEALTHY EATING

We should all eat at least two portions of fish per week, one of those choices being an oily fish. Government guidelines state that a portion is 140g (4¾oz) – quite a good size, even for a healthy appetite! It's well known by now that oily fish are packed with omega-3 fatty acids, which help prevent heart disease. They are also a good source of vitamins A and D, as well as minerals such as selenium and iodine. Selenium is vital for normal growth and fertility, for healthy hair, skin and eyesight, and it's now known to help protect against prostate cancer. Iodine – fish is one of the best sources, along with seaweed – is needed to make thyroid hormones that regulate physical and mental development, and govern the rate at which food is converted into energy. Fish is, of course, a fantastic source of protein.

Good bones

Even better where tinned fish is concerned are those that are canned with edible bones, such as sardines, pilchards, anchovies and salmon. These are good sources of essential calcium and phosphorus. Phosphorus is needed for healthy bones and teeth, and aids the absorption of nutrients.

The mercury issue

Nearly all fish contain traces of mercury, which are harmless. Fish that contain higher levels of mercury are shark, marlin and swordfish, which – apart from smoked marlin, you don't see very often in the UK – are rarely canned. Tuna is another potential source of higher levels. This is really only relevant in healthy terms when applied to pregnant women or women planning pregnancy, who should limit the amount they eat, whether tinned or fresh. There are possible risks to the developing nervous system of an unborn child.

OILY FISH – FRESH OR CANNED?

Salmon, sardines, mackerel, anchovies, trout and pilchards all still count as oily fish in your diet irrespective of whether they are tinned or not. The canning process doesn't reduce the amount of fatty acids. Tuna is the exception, as the way in which it is processed for canning means that it loses most of its fatty acids, taking it to the level of white fish. So, it's still a healthy choice – but not as an oily fish. Fresh tuna, however, is high in fatty acids.

OIL OR WATER?

Fish has been preserved in oil or salt for centuries. But now you find a variety of liquids in which fish are preserved.

- The latest in vogue is spring water, where you gain on the calories front but lose on flavour.
- Sunflower oil is more common and a cheaper alternative to olive oil. Healthy but not so flavoursome.
- Salt, especially for anchovies, tends to be from some of the better producers and they taste delicious. You can rinse off any excess salt but, if you have high blood pressure, salted fish are best avoided.
- Olive oil and the more expensive extra virgin olive oil will give a better texture and flavour, but will add calories. Although tuna tends to be dry if not in oil.

A point to remember, though, is that cheaper brands will be packed in cheaper oils, which won't taste as good. Where tinned fish is concerned, as with most foods, you get what you pay for. More expensive brands, especially the French and Spanish ones, are carefully and sustainably sourced. Fish may be filleted by hand, caught in carefully sized nets, and packed in higher-quality oils.

Ideas for tinned fish

- **Anchovies provide that elusive taste known as "umami", just like soy sauce or dried mushrooms, so they work in marvellous ways. Obviously, they are great on pizza or in pasta sauces, but try adding them to a rich beef casserole or studded into a leg of lamb. You won't taste the fishiness, it will just provide a richer flavour.**
- **The humble sardine, served on wholemeal toast with a side salad of watercress and tomato, makes a perfect, nutritionally balanced meal in less than 5 minutes. Pilchards, which are basically larger sardines and from the same family, do the same job.**
- **A tin of salmon is a great filler for a fish pie, simply added to white fish.**

For more nutritious food info, visit womanandhome.com/feelgoodfoods

WORDS JANE CURRAN **PHOTOGRAPH** RICHARD JUNG **PROP STYLING** SUE ROWLANDS

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Weekend food

Dining in is the new going out. And what could be better than spending a little time cooking something special for family and friends? As always, our inspirational recipes are loaded with ideas for preparing ahead and freezing, with something new for a Friday night, a different Sunday roast for the family, and great suppers for entertaining at home

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PHOTOGRAPH RICHARD JUNG PROP STYLING SUE ROWLANDS

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Roast quail with pomegranate, mint and parsley yogurt

Pomegranates' antioxidants help arteries stay clog free for a healthy heart.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 20 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

400g (14oz) Greek yogurt
bunch flat-leaf parsley, leaves only, finely chopped
bunch coriander, leaves only, finely chopped
large bunch mint, leaves only, finely chopped
2 small pomegranates, seeds only, plus 1, cut into quarters
4 to 8 quails, at room temperature (serves 1 to 2 per person)
4 small knobs of butter
extra virgin olive oil
small bunch chives, to serve (optional)

1 Heat the oven to 190 C, 170 C fan, 375 F, gas 5. In a mixing bowl, combine the yogurt with the parsley, coriander and half the mint. Season well with salt and pepper and stir in the pomegranate seeds. Set aside.
2 Stuff each quail with a small knob of butter and the remaining mint. Place in a roasting tin. Drizzle with the olive oil and sprinkle with salt. Place in the oven and roast for 15 to 20 minutes; you want the meat to remain juicy but not pink. After 10 minutes, baste with the juices in the tin.
3 When ready, serve the quail with the juices and yogurt sauce on basmati rice with fresh mint and snipped chives. Garnish each serving with a pomegranate quarter.
Per serving: 337 calories, 17g fat (8g saturated), 10g carbohydrate

Get ahead
This yogurt dressing can be made and kept in the fridge up to a day ahead

Herb-roasted chicken with spicy corn salsa

The phosphorus in corn is essential for growth, bone health and kidney functioning.

PREPARATION TIME: 30 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR 45 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

1.8kg (4lb) free-range, organic chicken
handfuls of fresh herbs, such as parsley, basil and tarragon
2tbsp olive oil
for the spicy corn salsa:
3 corn cobs, husks removed
1tbsp olive oil
1 red chilli, deseeded and chopped
2tbsp fresh coriander, chopped
juice 1 lime

1 Heat the oven to 190 C, 170 C fan, 375 F, gas 5. Using your fingers, loosen the skin from the flesh at the neck end of the chicken to about halfway up the breast. Stuff the pocket between the skin and flesh with the herbs. Tuck the flaps of skin back underneath and sit the chicken in a roasting tin. Drizzle with the oil, season with salt and freshly ground black pepper and roast for 1 hour 30 minutes to 1 hour 45 minutes, until cooked through.
2 Meanwhile, make the salsa. Heat a griddle pan until hot. Brush the cobs with a little of the olive oil and place on the pan. Cook for 5 minutes, turning frequently, until tender and slightly charred. Remove from the pan and set aside until cool enough to handle. Holding a cob upright on a chopping board, strip off the corn with a sharp knife and transfer to a bowl. Repeat with the remaining corn. Stir in the rest of the olive oil, the chilli, coriander and lime juice. Season and serve with the chicken.
Per serving: 326 calories, 19g fat (6g saturated), 10g carbohydrate

GREAT FOR VEGGIES

On the side

All recipes serve 4.

SWEET POTATO AND CELERIAC GRATIN

Heat the oven to 170 C, 150 C fan, 325 F, gas 3. Peel and slice 250g (9oz) **celeriac** and 350g (12oz) **sweet potatoes**. Place a layer of celeriac in a baking dish, season, then add a layer of sweet potato and a few slices of 1 **onion**. Repeat until the vegetables are used, finishing with a sweet potato and onion layer. Scatter over 75g (3oz) grated **cheese**, pour over 300ml (½pt) **vegetable stock** and bake for 35 to 40 minutes until the vegetables are soft.

ROAST POTATOES

Heat oven to 200 C, 180 C fan, 400 F, gas 6. Cook 1kg (2lb 4oz) **potatoes**, peeled and cut into chunks, in boiling water for 10 minutes. Drain, return to the pan, cover with a lid, and shake to ruffle the edges. Heat 100ml (4fl oz) **sunflower oil** in a roasting tin for 5 minutes until hot. Add the potatoes and roast for 45 minutes to 1 hour until the edges are crisp, turning twice during roasting. Drain on kitchen paper, season and serve.

ROASTED ROOTS

Toss 1kg (2lb 4oz) **turnip**, **carrots**, **squash** and **orange peppers**, all cut into chunks, in a little **olive oil**. Season and roast in a oven heated to 180 C, 160 C fan, 350 F, gas 4. Don't overcrowd them or they'll steam, not roast. Cook for 45 minutes to an hour.

STIR-FRIED GREENS

Use a mix of **tenderstem broccoli**, **spring greens** and **spinach**. Steam until just tender, then stir-fry in a little oil and season. Scatter over **toasted sesame seeds** and drizzle with some **balsamic glaze** to serve.

MASHED POTATOES

Boil 1kg (2lb 4oz) peeled and chopped **potatoes** until softened. Drain, mash with 50g (2oz) **butter** and a splash of **milk**. Season and dish up.

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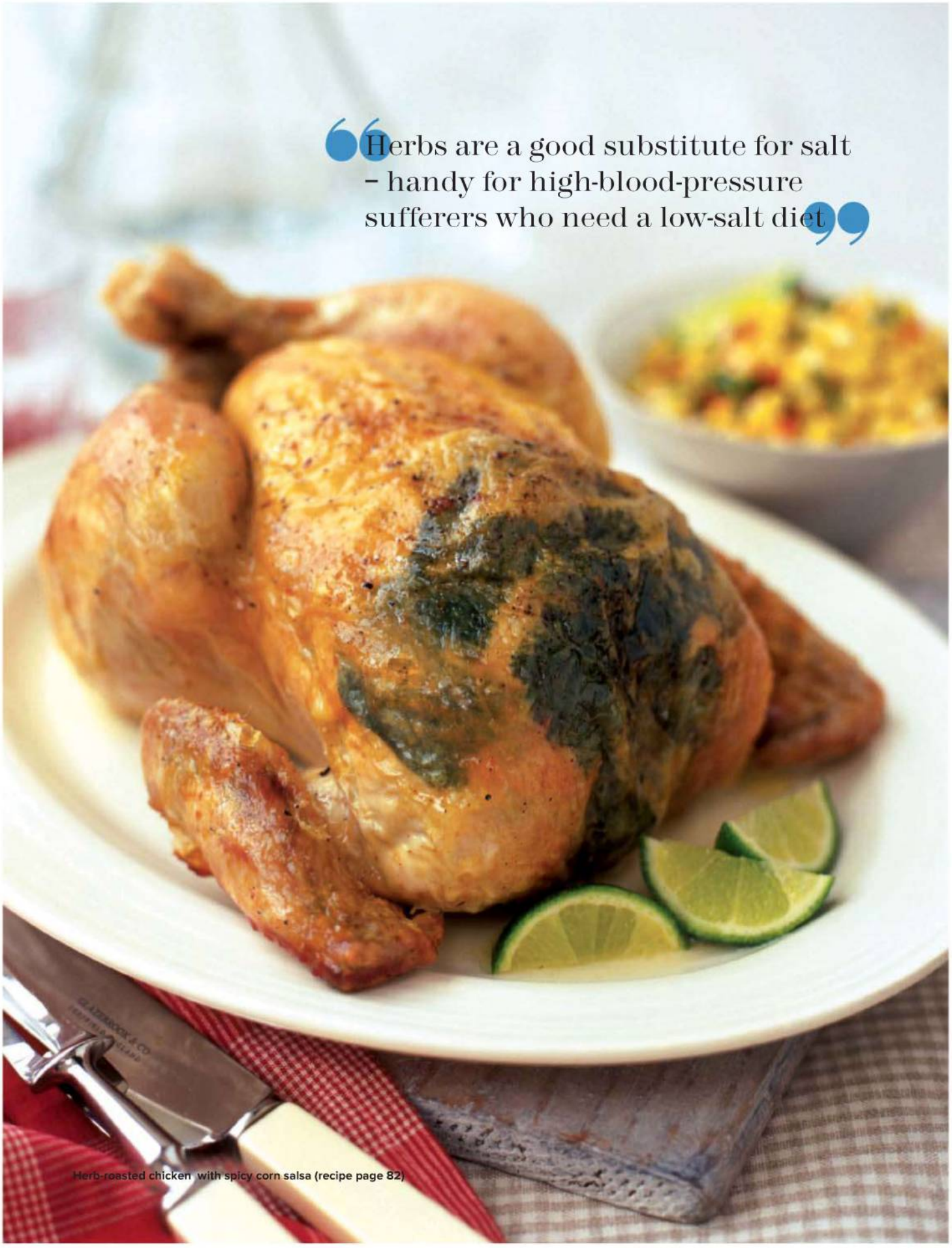
BIRD KNOW-HOW

When buying game birds, it's good to remember that wild or free-range ones will not only be much leaner, but also a lot more flavourful. Free-range birds are allowed to move freely and forage, meaning their muscles work much more than caged birds and so yield less-fatty meat. Their more-varied diet also gives the meat a much nicer flavour – and you can enjoy the bird knowing it has had a happy life.

> Moist, lean quail makes a great, healthy alternative to chicken

Roast quail with pomegranate, mint and parsley yogurt



Herb-roasted chicken with spicy corn salsa (recipe page 82)

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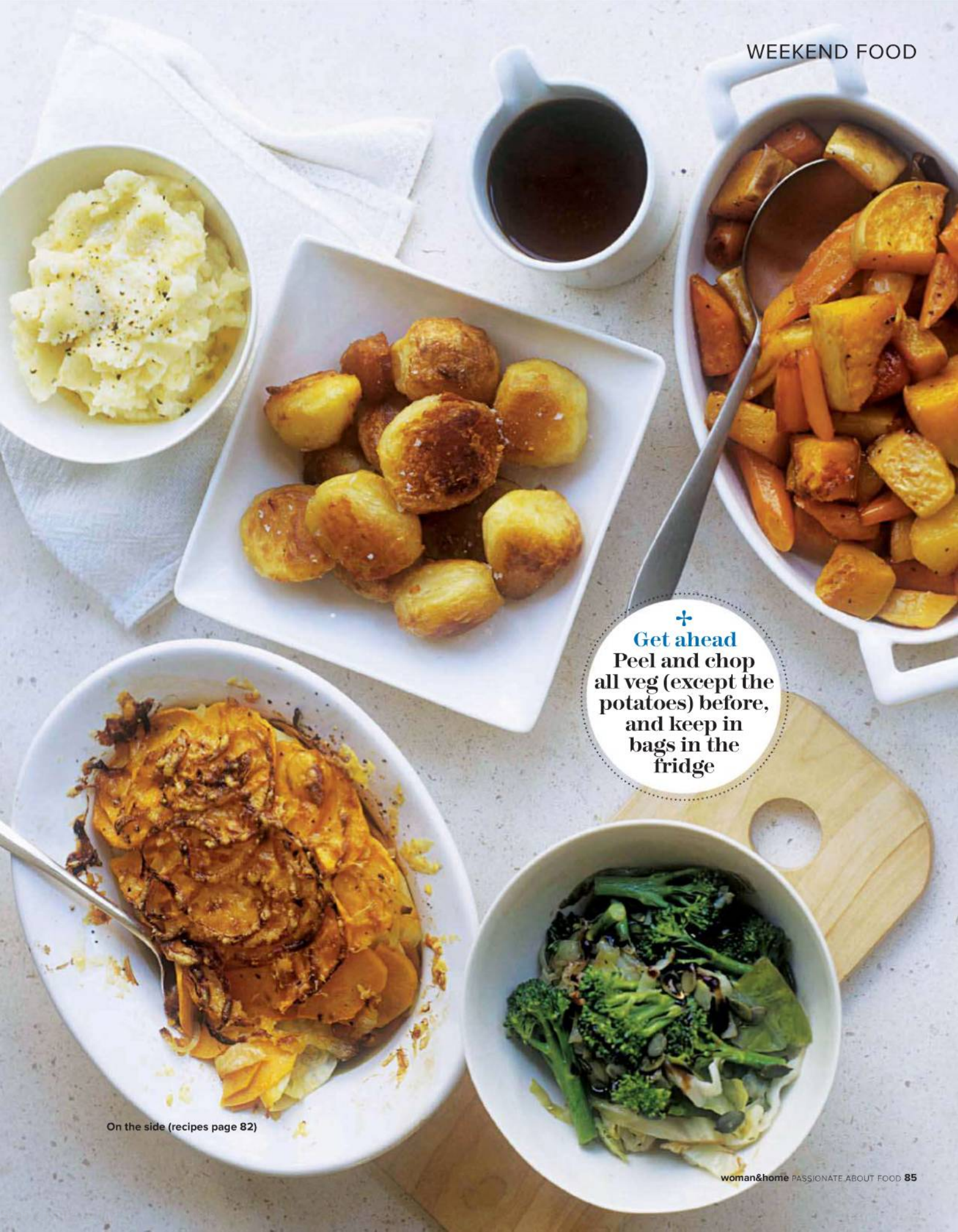

Get ahead
Peel and chop all veg (except the potatoes) before, and keep in bags in the fridge

On the side (recipes page 82)

Leg of pork with sloe gin and apples

Juniper berries make the pork gorgeously fragrant, and have antiseptic qualities too.

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES, PLUS MARINATING
COOKING TIME: 2 HOURS 15 MINUTES
SERVES 8 TO 12

PREPARE AHEAD

20 juniper berries
4 garlic cloves
2tsp sugar
4.1kg (9lb) free-range leg of pork, rind scored
100ml (4fl oz) sloe gin
extra virgin olive oil, for rubbing over
10 to 14 small red-skinned apples
36 to 52 pecan nut halves
50 to 100ml (2 to 4fl oz) boiling stock

1 Pound the juniper, garlic and sugar with a pestle and mortar. Put the leg of pork, rind side down, in a large roasting pan and rub the juniper paste over the flesh. Turn the joint over, add the sloe gin and marinate for up to 24 hours.
2 Heat the oven to 220 C, 200 C fan, 425 F, gas 7. Rub the olive oil over the rind, along with some salt and pepper. Roast for 45 minutes, then reduce the heat to 180 C, 160 C fan, 350 F, gas 4.
3 Core the apples, reserving the top 2cm (¾in) of each with stalk. Push 2 pecan halves inside each apple, place the top on, then arrange them around the pork. Cook together for 40 to 45 minutes, then take out the apples and set aside. Return all but 2 to the pan 10 minutes before the end of cooking time to warm through.
4 Roast for 40 minutes more, until the joint is cooked. Take out of the oven and rest for 10 minutes. Remove and discard the apple lids. Chop the 2 reserved cooked apples, place in a food processor and whizz to a purée. Push 2 more pecan halves into each remaining apple. Take out the meat and apples, pour the excess fat from the pan, and place it on to the heat for 5 minutes. Stir in the stock to create a sticky jus. Season to taste.
To serve, pull off a section of crackling and add a pecan apple for each diner. Serve the meat in thick slices with the jus and purée served separately.
Per serving: 730-487 calories, 26-17g fat (7-5g saturated), 19-13g carbohydrate

Leg of pork with sloe gin and apples

Roast duck made oh so easy

Iron in duck helps to make haemoglobin, which carries oxygen around the body.

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES, PLUS DRYING
COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR 30 MINUTES
SERVES 4 TO 6

EASY

1 free-range whole duck, around 2 to 2.25kg (4½ to 5lb)

1 Pierce the skin of the duck all over with a skewer. Place on a rack in the kitchen sink, and pour over 2 full kettles of boiling water. Pat dry with kitchen towel and leave to dry on a plate in the fridge for an hour. You do this to release the subcutaneous fat layer under the skin to give crispy, not fatty, duck.
2 Heat the oven to 200 C, 180 C fan, 400 F, gas 6. Place the duck on a rack or trivet over a deep roasting tin, as it will release around 300g (10oz) fat into the tin.
3 Add plenty of sea salt and roast for 1 hour 30 minutes. Carve the duck (see right) and serve.
Per serving: 445-296 calories, 21-14g fat (6.5-4.5g saturated), 0g carbohydrate

✢ PERFECT DUCK EVERY TIME

Once you're confident with the method, pep up your roast duck with delicious sauces:

- **✢ Orange sauce is a classic. First cook shallots in butter, add flour to thicken, then whisk in chicken stock and fresh orange juice. Simmer until thick, then add Cointreau and orange segments. For 4, you'll need 4 small oranges, 2tbsp Cointreau and 250ml (9fl oz) good chicken stock.**
- **✢ Make a quick and easy sauce with dried and bottled cherries. Sauté an onion, then add some port and cherries, and simmer until reduced. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper.**

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✢ HOW TO...

Carve a duck

Don't try to carve a duck – joint it instead. Remove the legs, just as you would a chicken. Now take the whole breasts off the bone, which will make the duck go much further. Ease your knife along the breast bone, then slice the breast.

Roast duck made oh so easy

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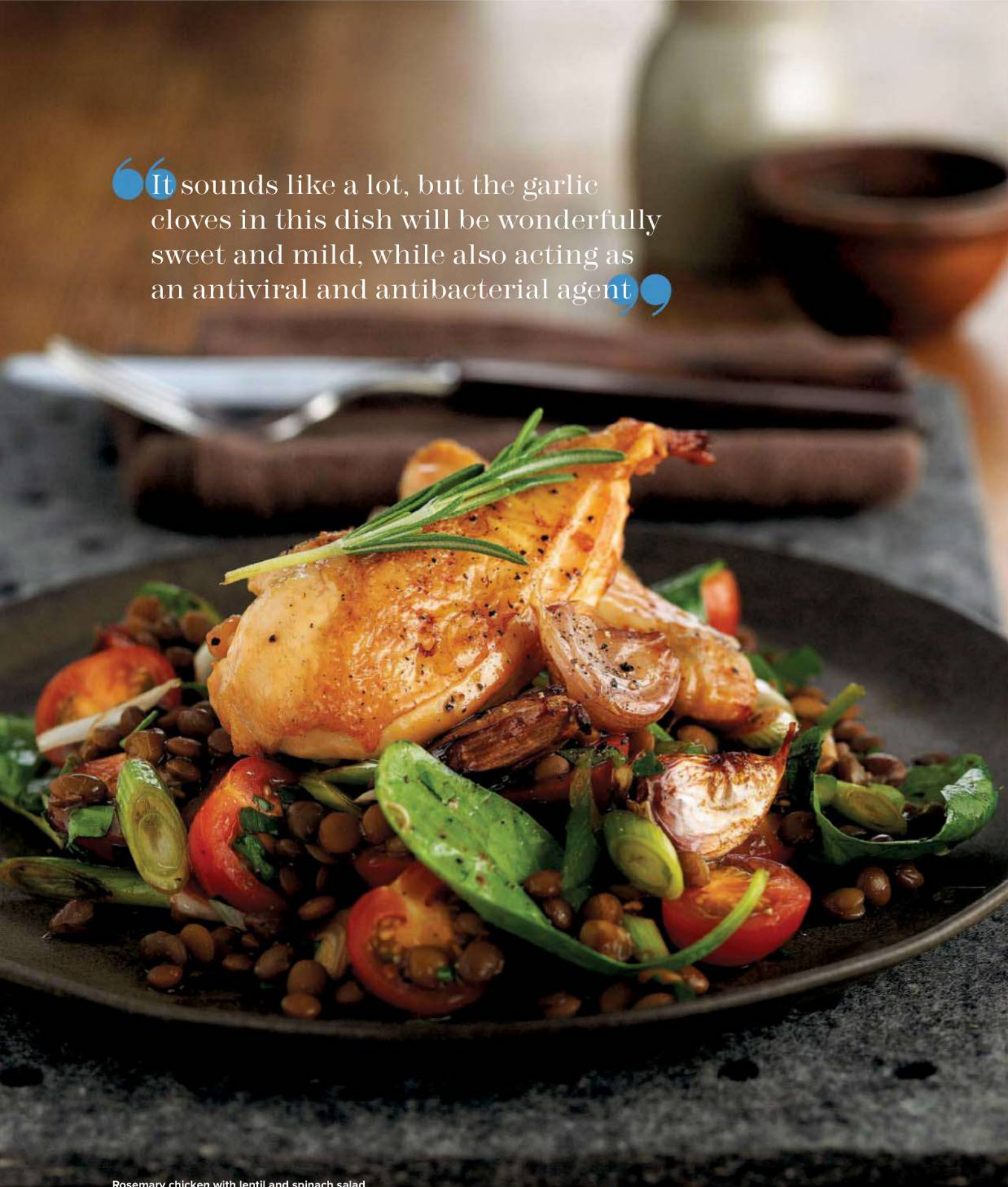

> It sounds like a lot, but the garlic cloves in this dish will be wonderfully sweet and mild, while also acting as an antiviral and antibacterial agent

Rosemary chicken with lentil and spinach salad

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FEEL GOOD+

VERSATILE SPICE

To create a dish that conjures up exotic Middle Eastern spice bazaars, simply add a sprinking of Ras-el Hanout. An aromatic spice blend, it is made up of a whole host of ingredients, including galangal, rose petals, black peppercorns, ginger, cardamom, nigella, cayenne, allspice, lavender, cinnamon, cassia, coriander seeds, mace, nutmeg and cloves. Try it rubbed on lamb before roasting.

Rosemary chicken with lentil and spinach salad

Spinach provides you with potassium, which is important in regulating blood pressure.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 50 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY

1 large free-range chicken, jointed (ask your butcher to do this)
12 garlic cloves
2 sprigs rosemary
300ml (½pt) white wine
400g tin brown lentils, drained and rinsed
bunch spring onions, sliced
350g (12oz) cherry tomatoes, halved
4tbsp parsley, chopped
2tbsp balsamic vinegar
100g (4oz) baby spinach

1 Heat the oven to 180 C, 160 C fan, 350 F, gas 4. Put the chicken pieces in a roasting tin with the garlic, rosemary, wine and 150ml (¼pt) water. Season well and roast for 45 minutes until cooked through. Add a little more water if the roasting tin looks dry.
2 Heat the lentils through with a little olive oil. Add the remaining ingredients to the lentils, including the juices from the roasting tin. Season well and divide among 4 plates. Top with the chicken and serve warm.
Per serving: 500 calories, 8g fat (2g saturated), 16g carbohydrate

Spiced roasted aubergine

Antioxidants found in the skin of aubergines help the body to fight off illness.

PREPARATION TIME: 5 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 30 MINUTES
SERVES 4

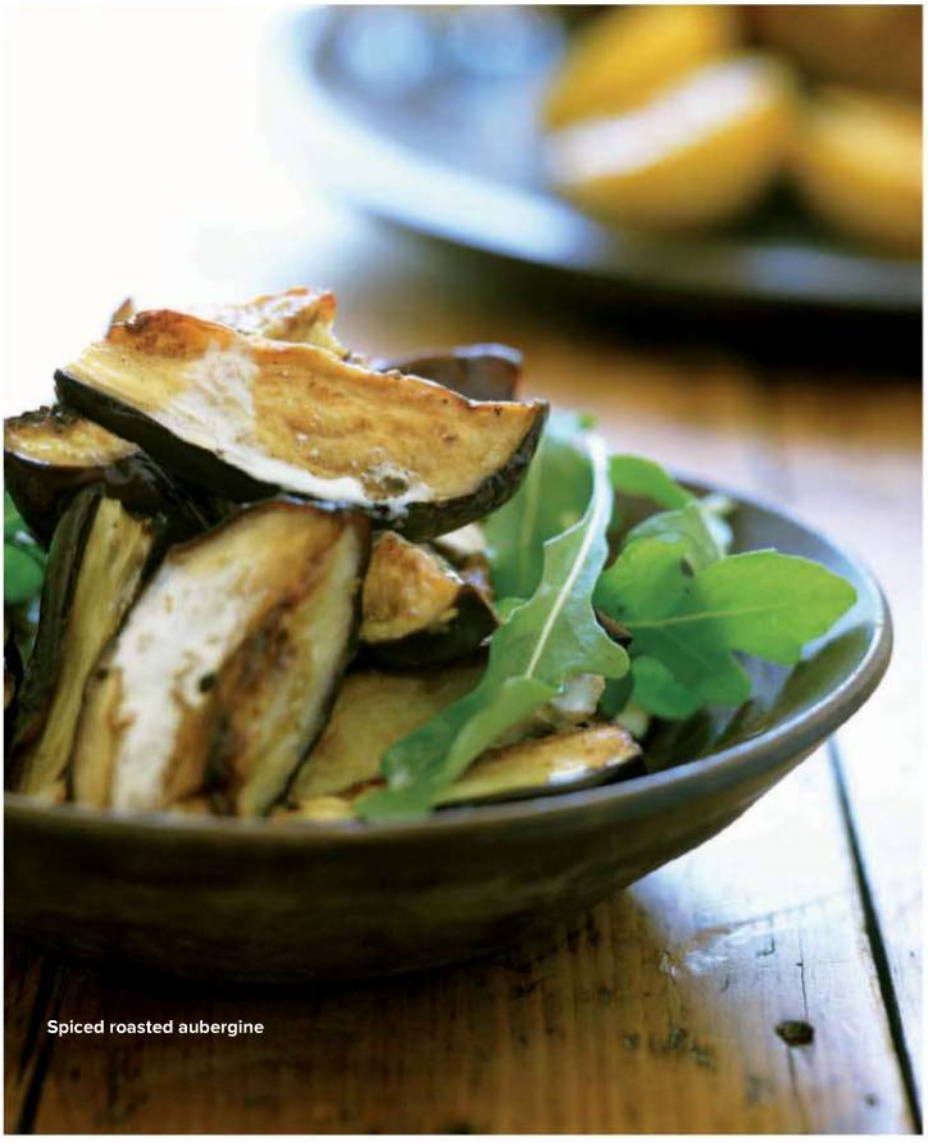
EASY

2 aubergines, halved and cut into wedges
2tbsp olive oil
1tbsp Moroccan spice mix (we like Ras-el Hanout, see left)
large handful rocket leaves
for the yogurt dressing:
4tbsp low-fat natural yogurt
1 garlic clove, crushed
juice 1 lemon

1 Heat the oven to 180 C, 160 C fan, 350 F, gas 4. Toss the aubergines with the oil and spice mix, season and roast for 30 minutes, or until softened and slightly charred.
2 Meanwhile, mix the yogurt with the garlic and lemon juice, and season. When the aubergines are cooked, allow to cool slightly before tossing with the rocket and drizzling with the yogurt dressing.
Per serving: 73 calories, 6g fat (1g saturated), 3g carbohydrate

TRY THIS

This would also make a healthy packed lunch, mixed with some cooked couscous or bulgur wheat and a handful of chopped coriander.



Spiced roasted aubergine

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Cheat's kedgeree

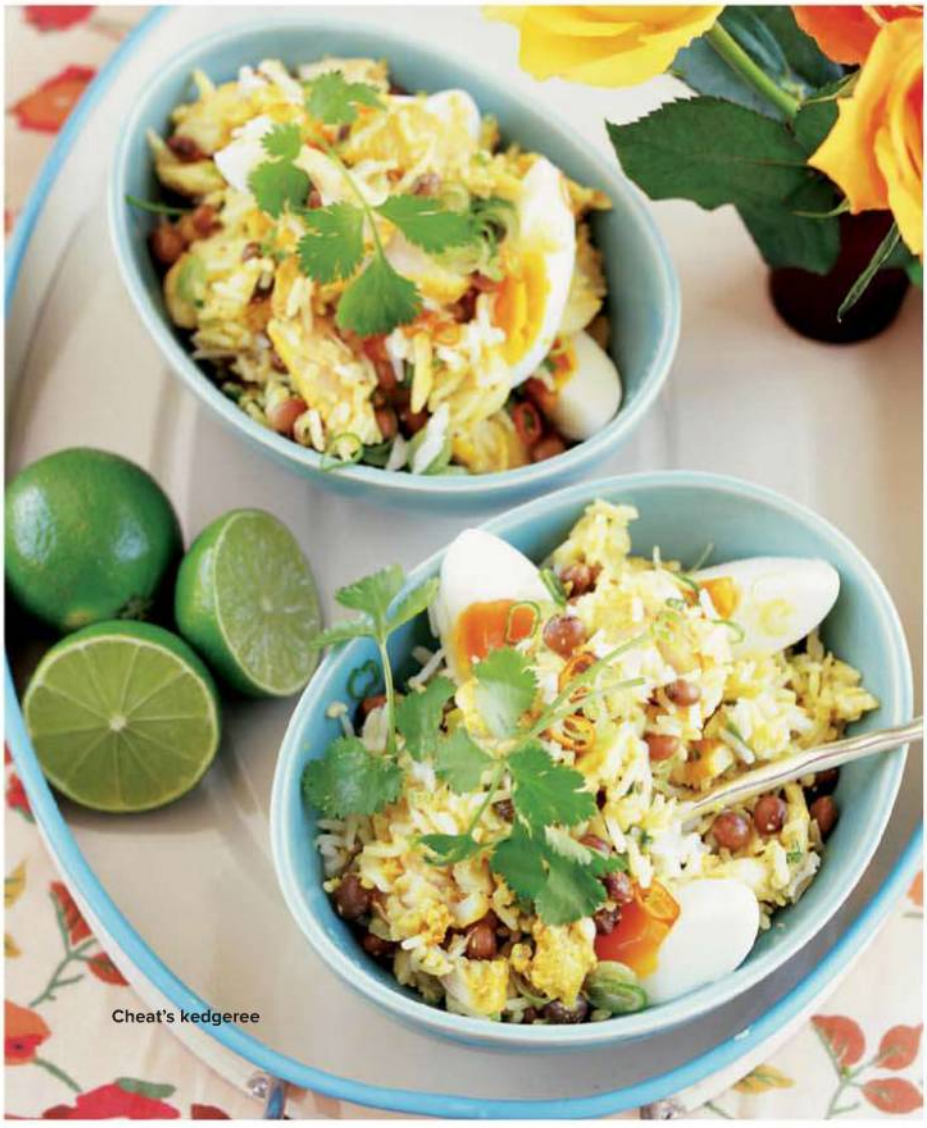
Gunga peas (or pigeon peas), used in Indian and African cooking, are protein rich.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 15 MINUTES
SERVES 4 TO 6

EASY

400g (14oz) cooked basmati or white rice
200 to 300g (7 to 10oz) tinned gunga peas or lentils, drained
50g (2oz) ghee or butter, chopped
2tbsp spice paste, such as harissa
2 x 250g (9oz) smoked haddock, hake or salmon fillets
6 spring onions, sliced
1 to 2 red or green chillies, sliced
200ml (7fl oz) reduced-fat coconut milk
100ml (4fl oz) vegetable stock
1 large handful fresh coriander, torn
3 free-range eggs, hard-boiled, shelled and quartered
2 to 3 limes, halved (optional)

1 Mix together the rice and peas and put to one side. Melt the ghee or butter in a large casserole and stir in the spice paste. Add the fish portions, skin side down, scatter the spring onions and chillies around the edge, then pour in the coconut milk and stock.
2 Cover, reduce the heat and cook for 8 minutes, then uncover. Remove the fish skin, discard and flake the fish into chunks. Put the rice and peas in the pan, cover and cook for 5 minutes, until everything is hot. Serve garnished with the coriander and eggs, adding lime halves, if liked.
Per serving: 737-491 calories, 23-15g fat (13-8g saturated), 83-55g carbohydrate



Cheat's kedgeree

Thyme-roasted partridges with pears

Boron in pears helps the body retain calcium, which helps prevent osteoporosis.

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 45 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY

350g (12oz) shallots
4 oven-ready partridges, or small poussins
plenty of thyme sprigs, plus extra to scatter
75g (3oz) unsalted butter
8 slices pancetta
3 russet pears such as Taylor's Gold, cored and cut into wedges
500ml (18fl oz) perry or pear cider
2tsp plain flour

1 Heat the oven to 190 C, 170 C fan, 375 F, gas 5. Blanch the unpeeled shallots in boiling water for 3 minutes, until they are just softened. Drain and, when cool, peel away the skins.
2 Rinse the partridges and pat inside and out with kitchen paper. Season and tuck a few thyme sprigs into the cavity of each. Place in a shallow ovenproof dish and dot the tops of the birds with half the butter. Scatter the shallots around the birds and roast for 10 minutes. Crumple the pancetta slices over the birds and return to the oven for a further 15 minutes.
3 While cooking, heat half the remaining butter in a frying pan and gently fry the pear wedges on their cut sides for 3 to 4 minutes until golden and tender. Remove to a plate. Add the perry to the pan and bring to the boil. Boil rapidly until reduced by about half. Blend the remaining butter with the flour to make a paste. Whisk into the reduced mixture until thickened and glossy.
4 Scatter the pears around the birds and pour the sauce into the dish. Return to the oven for a further 10 to 15 minutes, until the partridges are cooked through. Serve scattered with the extra thyme sprigs.
Per serving: 596 calories, 32g fat (15g saturated), 22g carbohydrate

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Try this

Instead of pears, use apple wedges and add cider rather than perry

Thyme-roasted partridges with pears

Storecupboard
Buy jars of good quality roasted red peppers and use instead of fresh

✢ GREAT FOR VEGGIES

Country bread salad

Well-flavoured tomato juice is the base of a garlicky dressing – a perfect lunch.

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 45 MINUTES
SERVES 4

✓ **EASY**

4 romano red peppers, cored and cut into small chunks
6tbsp extra virgin olive oil
150g (5oz) ciabatta or other rustic country bread, torn into small pieces
600g (1lb 5oz) cherry tomatoes, halved
½ small red onion, thinly sliced
handful basil leaves
handful black olives, pitted
1 plump garlic clove, crushed
4 to 5tsp red wine vinegar

1 Heat the oven to 180 C, 160 C fan, 350 F, gas 4. Place the peppers in a roasting tin, drizzle with 1tbsp of the olive oil and roast for 30 to 40 minutes, until soft and just beginning to colour. Scatter the bread over the peppers, drizzle with another 2tbsp of the oil and return to the oven for a further 5 minutes or until lightly toasted.
2 Scoop the tomatoes' seeds and pulp into a sieve set over a bowl. Press the pulp with the back of a spoon to squeeze out the juice (if the pulp is quite firm, whizz it in a food processor first so it's easier to extract the juice). Discard the pulp.
3 Toss together the roasted peppers and bread, tomatoes, onion, basil and olives in a salad bowl. To make the dressing, whisk the tomato juice with the remaining oil, the garlic and red wine vinegar, so the dressing is tangy but not too sharp. Season and pour the dressing over the salad about 10 minutes before serving. This will allow the dressing to soften the bread, but not turn it completely soggy.
Per serving: 313 calories, 19g fat (3g saturated), 29g carbohydrate

Country bread salad

Pear salad

Roasted squash with feta

✢ GREAT FOR VEGGIES

Pear salad

Tinned fruit in natural juice will still count towards your five a day.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
SERVES 4

✓ **EASY**

420g tin pears, quartered and drained
1tsp Very Lazy Red Chillies
200g (7oz) mixed salad leaves
85g (3½oz) Parmesan, shaved
1tbsp orange blossom honey
2tbsp olive oil

Toss the pears and the chillies with the salad in a large bowl. Scatter with the Parmesan shavings, then drizzle with the orange blossom honey and olive oil. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper and serve.
Per serving: 200 calories, 12g fat (5g saturated), 13g carbohydrate

✢ PEAR KNOW-HOW

- **Comice have a buttery taste. They are good on their own or with wedges of Stilton cheese.**
- **Conference have a long elongated body and firm, almost grainy texture. They hold their shape well when poached.**
- **Williams have a flavoursome, juicy flesh. They're used to make the French liqueur, Poire William.**

✢ GREAT FOR VEGGIES

Roasted squash with feta

Onion squash is a winter squash rich in A and B vitamins. If hard to find, use butternut.

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 35 MINUTES
SERVES 4

✓ **EASY**

2 onion squash, deseeded and cut into 4
3 to 4tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 dried red chilli
small bunch oregano
500g (1lb 2oz) small plum or cherry tomatoes (on the vine)
175g (6oz) feta* cheese, thinly sliced
for the roasted onions:
4 red onions, peeled
100g (4oz) caster sugar
200ml (7fl oz) balsamic vinegar
50ml (2fl oz) extra virgin olive oil
for the basil oil:
3 large bunches basil, leaves only
1 garlic clove
200ml (7fl oz) extra virgin olive oil

1 Heat the oven to 180 C, 160 C fan, 350 F, gas 4. Lay the squash, flesh side up, on a baking tray and drizzle with a little oil. Crumble over the dried chilli and scatter over the oregano leaves. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper and roast for about 35 minutes.
2 To make the roasted onions, thickly slice the onions and spread on a baking tray. Sprinkle with the sugar and some salt and pepper. Pour over the vinegar and oil, and lightly mix together with your hands. Roast for 30 minutes or so, turning and basting halfway through.
3 Halfway through cooking, place the tomatoes on another baking tray. Drizzle with a little oil, season and roast for 15 minutes, then allow the squash and tomatoes to cool.
4 Meanwhile, make the basil oil. Place the basil in a blender with the garlic and a pinch each of salt and pepper. Process until finely chopped. With the motor running, slowly trickle in the oil and blend until puréed. Pour into a jar, cover and refrigerate. This basil oil will keep in the fridge for up to a week.
5 Pile the squash and tomatoes in shallow bowls and scatter over the roasted onions. Arrange the feta on top, spoon over 2tbsp basil oil and a little more extra virgin olive oil.
**Use vegetarian feta if you're following a strict vegetarian diet.*
Per serving: 784 calories, 49g fat (12g saturated), 70g carbohydrate

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Mediterranean fish stew with rouille croutons

Studies have shown that people who eat a seafood-rich diet have less heart disease.

PREPARATION TIME: 30 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 30 MINUTES
SERVES 6

EASY

1tbsp olive oil
1 large onion, chopped
3 garlic cloves, crushed
1 large red chilli, finely chopped
2 bulbs fennel, quartered
2tbsp Pernod
100ml (4fl oz) Noilly Prat or other dry vermouth
400g tin chopped tomatoes
1tbsp tomato purée
pinch saffron
1 dressed crab
250g (9oz) monkfish fillet, cubed
200g (7oz) roeless scallops
400g (14oz) raw king prawns, peeled
600g (1lb 5oz) mussels, scrubbed
2tbsp flat-leaf parsley, chopped
for the rouille:
1 large garlic clove, crushed
pinch saffron
1 large anchovy fillet
¼tsp harissa paste
little lemon juice, to taste
125g (4½oz) fresh mayonnaise
for the croutons:
1 small baguette, diagonally sliced
little olive oil

1 To make the rouille, pound the garlic, saffron, anchovy, harissa and lemon juice in a mortar and pestle or mini chopper, then stir into the mayonnaise.
2 For the croutons, heat the oven to 200 C, 180 C fan, 400 F, gas 6. Brush each side of the baguette slices with the oil, then place on a wire rack in the oven for about 10 minutes, until crisp. Dip croutons into half of the parsley before serving.
3 In a large saucepan, heat the olive oil, add the onion and cook for a few minutes, then add the garlic, chilli and fennel. Stir well and cook for a minute, then add the alcohol. Bring to the boil for a few minutes, then add the tomatoes, purée and saffron. Season, simmer for 10 minutes, then add all of the fish, ending with the mussels.
4 Cover and cook for about 5 minutes, until the mussels have opened and all the fish has cooked through. Scatter over the remaining parsley. Ladle into bowls, serving the rouille and croutons on the side, if you like. The rouille should be served on top of the croutons for dunking in the stew.
Per serving: 280 calories, 16g fat (1g saturated), 5g carbohydrate

GET AHEAD
The rouille will keep for up to 3 days, covered, in the fridge. You can make the croutons the day before and keep in a lidded box. Prepare the base for the stew up to 8 hours ahead – just add the fish shortly before serving.

Oven-steamed halibut

Quercetin, a strong antioxidant and natural antihistamine, is found in capers.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 20 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

4 x 150g (5oz) halibut fillets, skinned
2tbsp olive oil
zest and juice 1 lemon, plus 1 lemon, cut into wedges
2tbsp capers, chopped
8 mild Peppadew peppers, cut into slivers
2tbsp each flat-leaf parsley and dill
25g (1oz) butter

1 Heat the oven to 200 C, 180 C fan, 400 F, gas 6. Arrange the halibut fillets in a large roasting tin or ovenproof dish. Mix the olive oil, lemon zest and juice, capers, Peppadew peppers and half the herbs together, and season. Drizzle over the fish and dot each fillet with a knob of butter.
2 Cover the dish tightly with foil and cook in the oven for 15 to 20 minutes, until the fish is opaque and cooked through.
3 Scatter over the remaining herbs and lemon wedges before serving with new potatoes and steamed vegetables.
Per serving: 264 calories, 14g fat (4.5g saturated), 2.5g carbohydrate

Balsamic-glazed rack of lamb with sweet potato gratin

Honey is reputed to be a soothing remedy for sufferers of coughs and chest infections.

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES, PLUS MARINATING
COOKING TIME: AROUND 55 MINUTES
SERVES 8

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD / FREEZE

3 or 4 racks of lamb
175ml (6fl oz) olive oil
juice 1 lemon
large handful oregano, chopped
4 garlic cloves, chopped
5tbsp aged balsamic vinegar
1½tbsp clear honey
4tbsp fresh mint, chopped
300g (10oz) potatoes, thinly sliced
300g (10oz) sweet potatoes, thinly sliced
3 courgettes, thinly sliced
2 red onions, thinly sliced

1 Place the lamb in a large non-metallic dish. Mix together 130ml (4½fl oz) olive oil, the lemon juice, half the oregano, the garlic and some seasoning; pour over the lamb. Leave to marinate in the fridge for at least 2 hours or overnight if possible. To make the balsamic glaze, mix the vinegar, honey and mint with some salt and black pepper in a small bowl, then set aside.
2 Heat the oven to 200 C, 180 C fan, 400 F, gas 6. Brown the racks of lamb in a little olive oil until browned on the outside, then place on a large baking tray and roast for 20 minutes per 450g (1lb) for pink lamb, 25 minutes for well done.
3 Arrange the potato, sweet potato, courgette and onion slices in a large roasting dish. Drizzle over the remaining olive oil and season well. Bake in the oven for 30 to 40 minutes, or until golden.
4 Five minutes before the end of cooking, brush the lamb racks with the balsamic glaze, then cook for another 5 minutes or until cooked but slightly pink in the middle. Bring the rest of the glaze to the boil, then serve with the lamb in a small bowl. Carve the lamb into cutlets and serve with a sweet potato and celeriac gratin (see page 82).
Per serving: 466 calories, 31g fat (9g saturated), 21g carbohydrate

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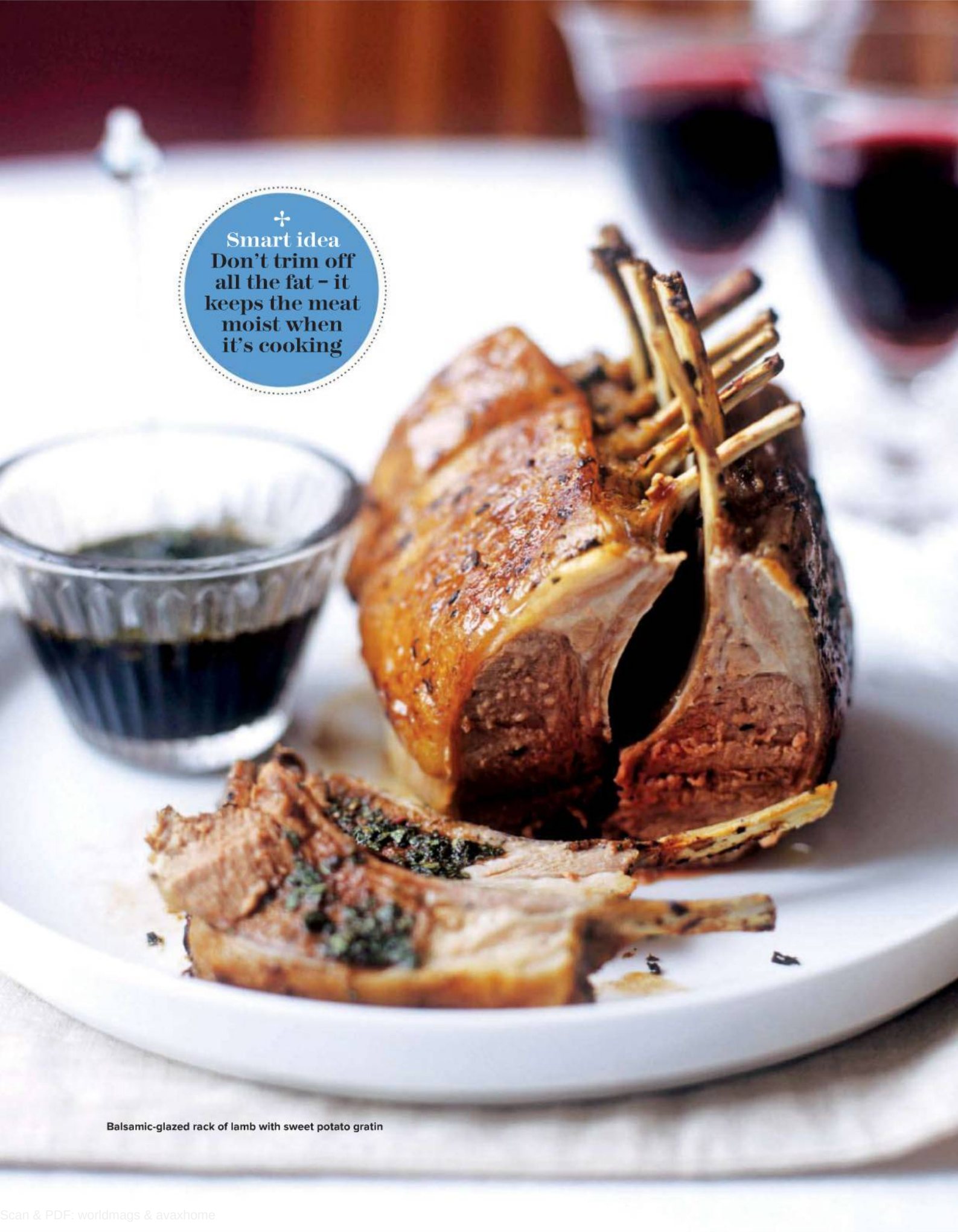

Smart idea
Don't trim off all the fat – it keeps the meat moist when it's cooking

Balsamic-glazed rack of lamb with sweet potato gratin

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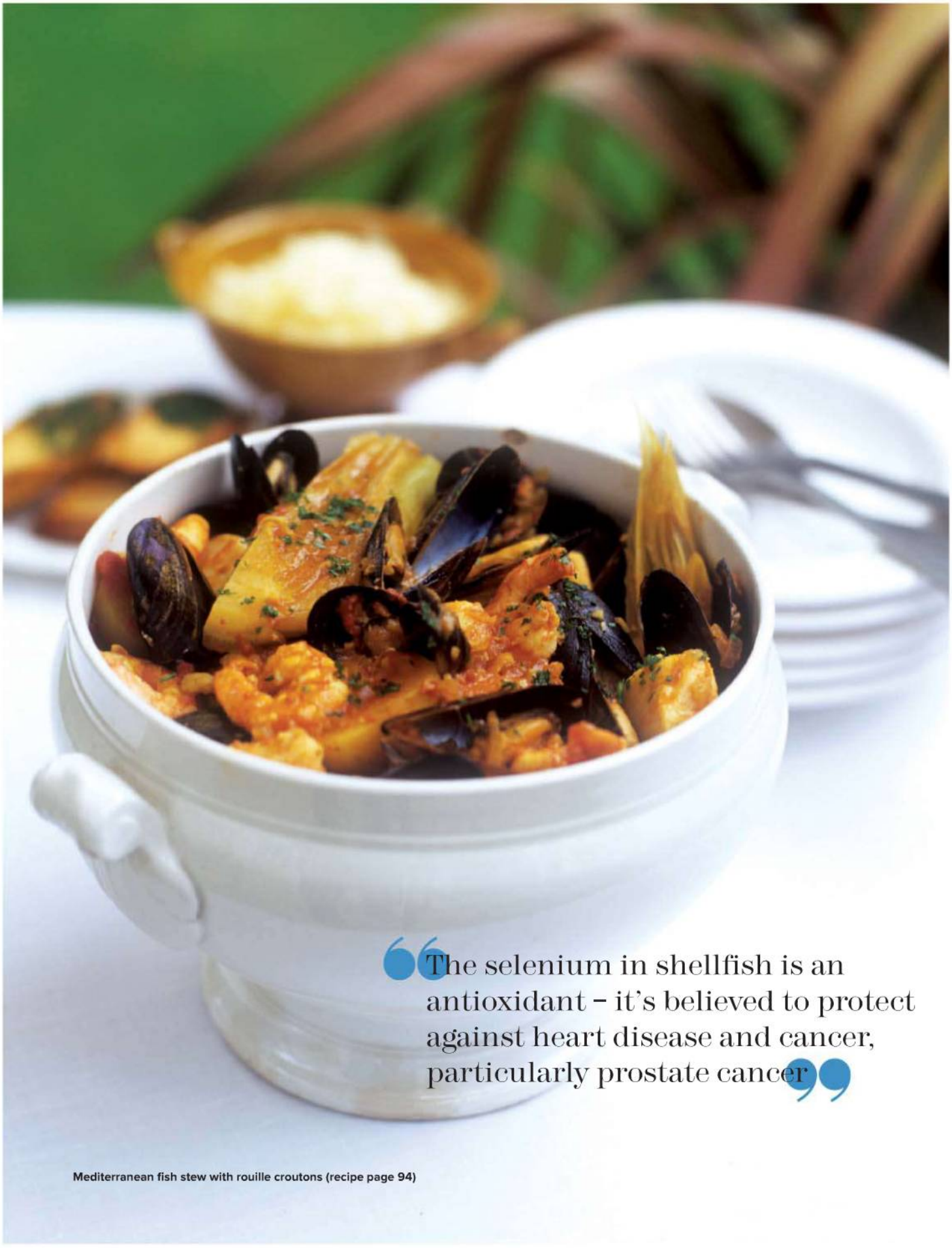

> The selenium in shellfish is an antioxidant – it's believed to protect against heart disease and cancer, particularly prostate cancer

Mediterranean fish stew with rouille croutons (recipe page 94)

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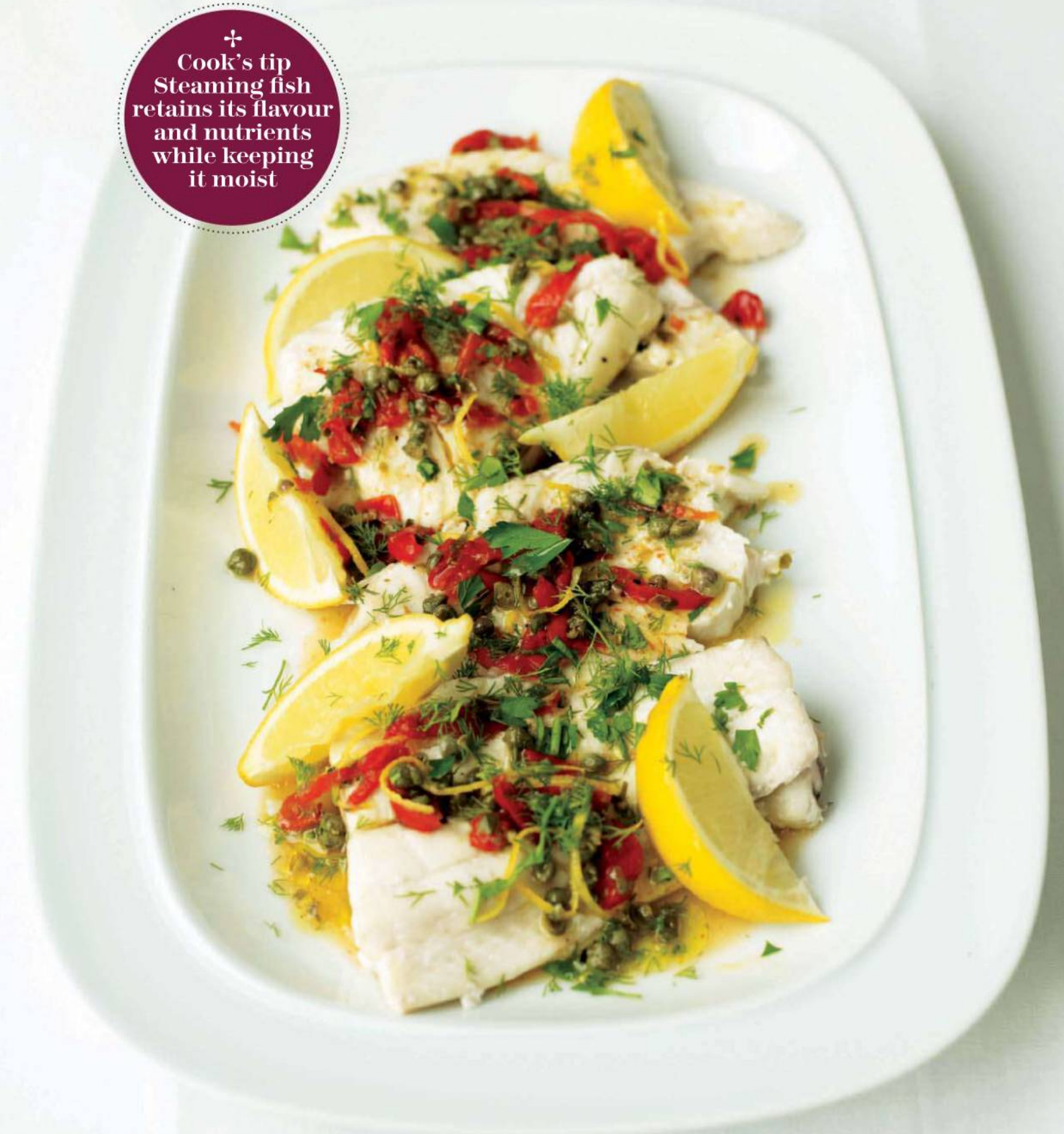
Cook's tip
Steaming fish retains its flavour and nutrients while keeping it moist



Oven-steamed halibut (recipe page 94)

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Cook's tip
Make a batch of these tomatoes and store in oil, in the fridge, for up to 1 month

Oven-dried tomato and basil pasta salad, roasted red onion and pepper potato salad, three-bean tikka salad

✢ GREAT FOR VEGGIES

On the side

✢ OVEN-DRIED TOMATO AND BASIL PASTA

Heat the oven to 130 C, 110 C fan, 250 F, gas ½. Place 5 large **tomatoes**, which have been halved, cut side up in a roasting tin. Sprinkle over 2tsp **olive oil**, 1tsp **caster sugar** and a few **thyme sprigs**. Season and roast in the oven for 90 minutes until they're wrinkled and fragrant. When the tomatoes are almost ready, cook 200g (7oz) **pasta** according to the pack instructions. Drain, coat in a glug of **olive oil** and leave to cool slightly. Toss with the cooked tomatoes, a large handful of chopped **basil** and some seasoning. Serves 3 to 4.

✢ ROASTED RED ONION AND PEPPER POTATO SALAD

Heat oven to 200 C, 180 C fan, 400 F, gas 6. Place 1 **red onion** and 1 **red pepper**, both cut into chunks, in a roasting tin and drizzle with 1tbsp **olive oil**, then season. Roast for 30 minutes until the veg are slightly blackened and caramelised. About 10 minutes into the cooking time, boil 500g (1lb 2oz) **new potatoes**, which have been halved, for 15 to 20 minutes until tender. Drain, cool slightly and mix with the roasted veg, 2tbsp **olive oil**, zest and juice 1 **lemon**, the leaves from 2 sprigs **rosemary** and 1 to 2tbsp small (nonpareille) **capers**, drained and rinsed. Serve warm or cold. Serves 6.

✢ THREE-BEAN TIKKA SALAD

Combine 100ml (4fl oz) 0% **Greek yogurt** with 1tbsp **tikka paste** and juice ½ **lemon**. Season well. Mix with 410g tin each **kidney beans**, **butter beans** and **cannellini beans**, drained and rinsed; 1 sliced **red onion**, finely sliced **spring onions**, and a large handful chopped **coriander** leaves. Leave for 30 minutes to allow the flavours to combine. Serve immediately, or leave overnight in the fridge and allow to come back to room temperature before serving. Serves 6 to 8.

✢ GREAT FOR VEGGIES

Sweet pork fillet with rösti

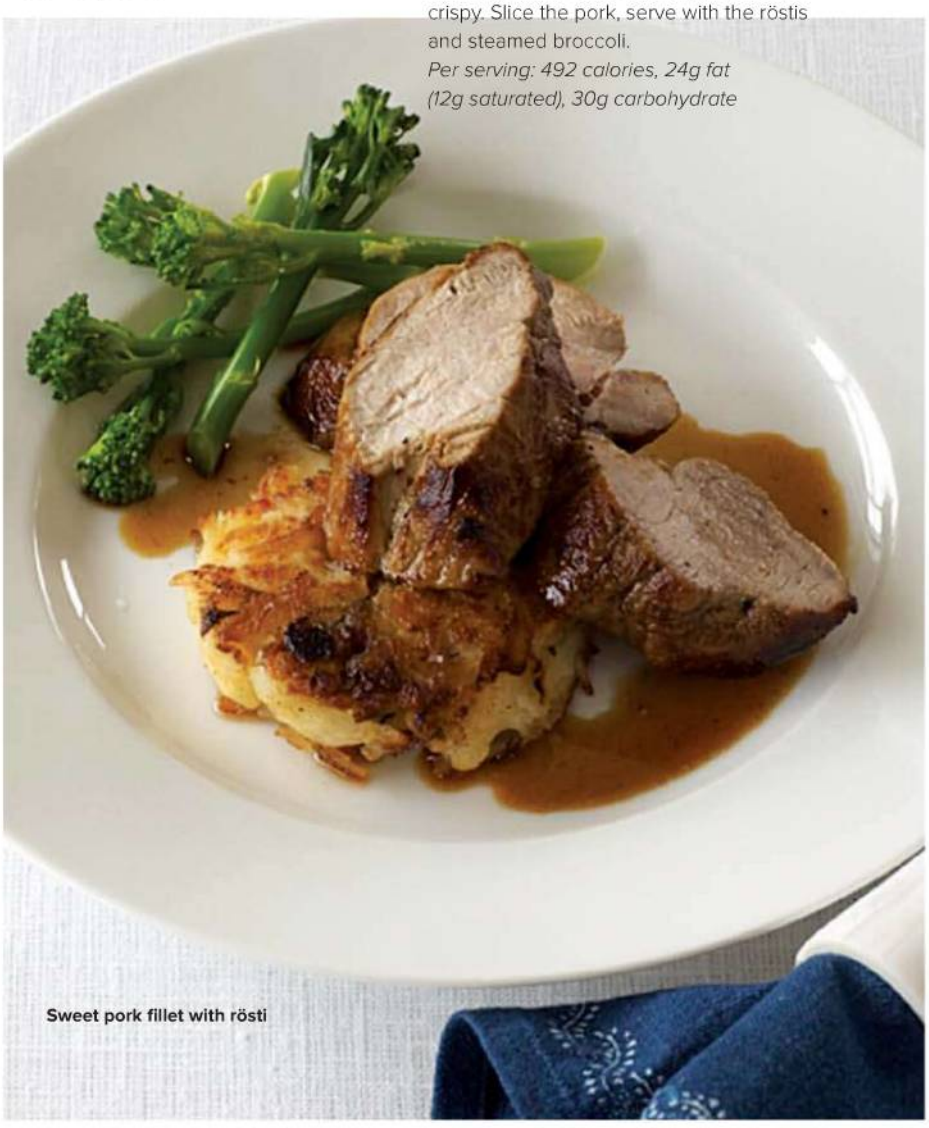
Potatoes are a high-carbohydrate food, which contain both fibre and protein.

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 15 MINUTES
SERVES 4

✓ **EASY**

2 free-range pork tenderloin fillets, seasoned
2tbsp honey
50g (2oz) butter
2 medium Estima potatoes, peeled
1 apple, peeled
4tbsp half-fat crème fraîche
4 free-range egg yolks
4 prunes, stoned

1 Heat the oven to 220 C, 200 C fan, 425 F, gas 7. Brush the pork fillets with the honey. Heat a pan and add half the butter and the pork. Seal until golden brown. Place in the oven for 8 to 10 minutes, until just cooked through. Remove from the oven and rest for 5 minutes.
2 To make the rösti, grate the potatoes and apple into a tea towel. Twist the tea towel to squeeze out any liquid, then place in a bowl. Add the crème fraîche and egg yolks and season. Fill 4 x 7.5cm (3in) rings halfway up with the mix. Place a prune on top of each, fill to the top with the remaining mixture and press down firmly. Heat a frying pan, add the remaining butter and the röstis. Remove rings; cook for 2 to 3 minutes on each side until golden and crispy. Slice the pork, serve with the röstis and steamed broccoli.
Per serving: 492 calories, 24g fat (12g saturated), 30g carbohydrate



Sweet pork fillet with rösti

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A GRADUATE OF THE BALLYMALOE HOUSE COOKERY SCHOOL, WHERE SHE STILL TEACHES TODAY, RACHEL ALLEN IS AN ADVOCATE OF COOKING GREAT FOOD THAT'S RICH IN FLAVOUR AND FULL OF NUTRITIONAL VALUE. LAMB CANNOT BE INTENSELY REARED, SO IT'S NATURALLY FREE-RANGE. THE FLAVOUR INTENSIFIES AS WE HEAD INTO AUTUMN.

> People often ask me what I cook and how I get my children to eat nutritious food – there is no trick, it just tastes good!

RACHEL ALLEN'S

Roast leg of lamb with garlic, rosemary and olive paste

Cooking at home is very important to me, it evokes such lovely childhood memories, and is such a joy. I love it when my husband, Isaac, makes this for Sunday lunch. It's an easy dish that is perfect for all those casual occasions when the whole gang gets together.

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR 5 MINUTES TO 1 HOUR 45 MINUTES
SERVES 8 TO 10

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

for the lamb:
1 leg of lamb, about 2.5 to 3.25kg (5½ to 7¼lb)
2tbsp olive oil
1tsp cracked black pepper (best if it is still a little coarse)
1 generous tbsp rosemary, chopped
8 garlic cloves, peeled and sliced
for the olive paste:
100g (4oz) pitted black olives
1tbsp capers
1tsp Dijon mustard
1tsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
black pepper, freshly ground
4tbsp olive oil

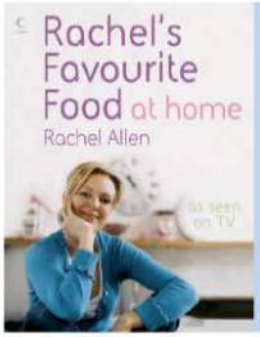
1 Heat the oven to 230 C, 210 C fan, 450 F, gas 8. Using a very sharp knife, make about 10 shallow slashes in criss-cross patterns on the top side of the meat. Mix together the olive oil, pepper, rosemary, sea salt and garlic and spread all over the lamb, pushing it into the incisions. Place it in a roasting tin and put it into the preheated oven.

2 Cook for 20 minutes, then turn the heat down to 180 C, 160 C fan, 350 F, gas 4 and cook for a further 45 minutes for pink lamb, 1 hour 10 minutes for medium, or 1 hour 25 minutes for well done. This cooking time allows 20 minutes per 500g (1lb 2oz) at this temperature. I usually aim for medium since there will inevitably be some pink bits and some well done, so that everyone can have their favourite!

3 To make the olive paste, whizz up the olives with the capers, mustard, lemon juice and pepper in a food processor – you probably won't need any salt. Add the olive oil. It keeps for months in a sterilised jar in the fridge.

4 When the lamb is cooked, allow it to rest for 15 minutes, covered with foil, somewhere warm if possible, then carve into slices and serve with the olive paste, mint sauce or redcurrant jelly.

Per serving: 470-376 calories, 29-24g fat (10-8g saturated), 0g carbohydrate



***RACHEL ALLEN'S RACHEL'S FAVOURITE FOOD AT HOME* (COLLINS, £17.99)**
Rachel Allen's book offers the sort of delicious, inspiring and easy-to-follow recipes for which she is famous. With more than 120 recipes, drawn from both international and classic dishes as well as family favourites, Rachel provides ideas for every occasion. Whether it's Moroccan lamb tagine or Toffee, apple and almond crumble, there are great suggestions for meals to share with family or friends.

MAIN PHOTOGRAPH PETER CASSIDY

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Rachel Allen's Roast leg of lamb with garlic, rosemary and olive paste

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Divine desserts

Can anything give you more of that feel good factor than a delicious dessert? Luckily, our favourite chocolate boosts that happy hormone serotonin, so there's definitely an excuse to tuck in – in moderation, of course. Remember our mantra – a little bit of what you fancy does you good, but just keep those little fancy bits for the weekend and special occasions

PHOTOGRAPH RICHARD JUNG **PROP STYLING** SUE ROWLANDS

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Pears poached in dessert wine

Pears poached in dessert wine

Pears have a high pectin content, which is thought to help lower cholesterol levels.

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 20 MINUTES
SERVES 4

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

8 firm dessert pears, with stalks
150g (5oz) golden raisins or sultanas
200ml (7fl oz) non-vintage Sauternes or other fragrant sweet wine
2 vanilla pods, quartered lengthways
1 cinnamon stick, crushed into shards lengthways
100g (4oz) vanilla sugar

1 With a vegetable peeler, cut even lengthways strips from the skin of each pear, leaving 6 or 8 thin skin stripes on as decoration. Remove the centre of each pear with an apple corer. Lift out and discard the core and base, pushing the stemmed top back in, then fill each base with raisins or sultanas.

2 Heat the Sauternes, vanilla strips, cinnamon shards and sugar in a saucepan that's just big enough to hold the pears upright. When the syrup boils, lower the pears (still upright) into the pan on a spoon, cover the pan and simmer for 15 to 18 minutes or until the pears are tender. Cool and serve on a shallow platter, pouring the cooled syrup around the pears.

Per serving: 370 calories, 0.5g fat, (0g saturated), 85g carbohydrate

Get ahead
You can make this dessert the day before and refrigerate it

Spiced apple pie with quince jelly

Quinces, which are rich in vitamin C and potassium, have a natural affinity with apples.

PREPARATION TIME: 30 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 25 MINUTES
SERVES 8

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

500g (1lb 2oz) Bramley apples (around 2 large), peeled and cored
325g (11oz) Cox's apples (around 4), peeled and cored
125g (4½oz) golden caster sugar
75g (3oz) quince jelly (membrillo), cut into small cubes
½tsp ground cinnamon
3 whole cloves
375g (13oz) all-butter shortcrust pastry
a little milk, to glaze the top of the pie
you will need:
23cm (9in) metal pie dish, greased

1 Heat the oven to 200 C, 180 C fan, 400 F, gas 6. Slice the apples and place in a large bowl with 100g (4oz) of the caster sugar, reserving the rest to sprinkle on top. Add the quince jelly, cinnamon and cloves. Toss everything together with your hands and leave on one side while you roll out the pastry.

2 Divide the pastry in half and roll out 1 piece on a lightly floured board to line the pie dish, making sure there's plenty of pastry overhanging the sides. Dampen the edges with a little water, then place the apple mixture in the pastry-lined dish.

3 Roll out the remaining pastry and cover the top of the pie. Press down the edges well, trim the excess pastry with a sharp knife and use a flat-bladed knife to "knock up" the pastry – hold a sharp knife at right angles to the edge and gently tap the edges together (this helps seal the join).

4 Make a couple of small holes in the top of the pastry with a sharp knife, so that the steam can escape.

5 Brush the top of the pie with a little milk and sprinkle over the remaining sugar. Bake in the oven for 25 minutes or until the pastry is a gorgeous golden brown. Serve with vanilla custard or ice cream.

Per serving: 332 calories, 13g fat (4g saturated), 53g carbohydrate

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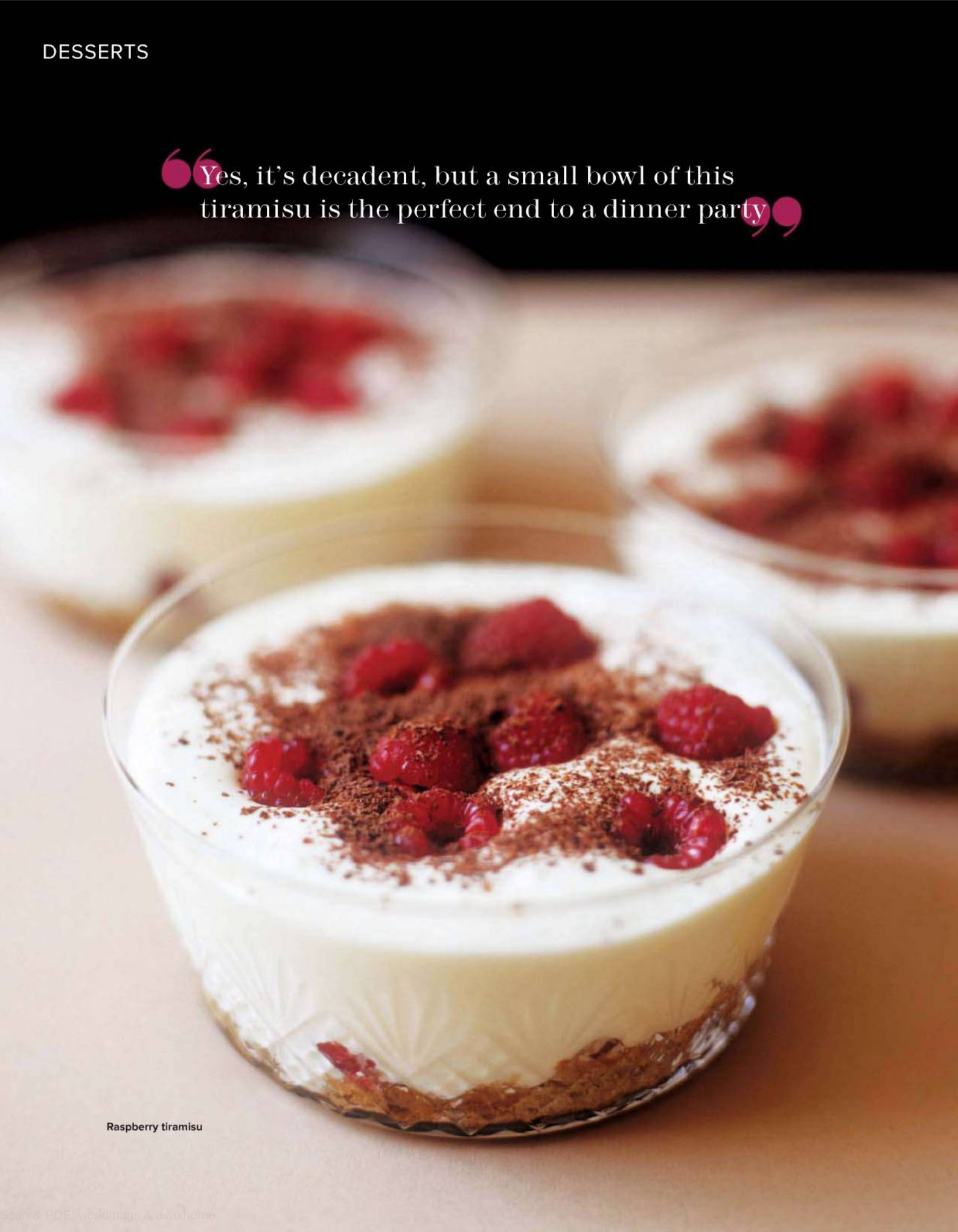
> Combining fluffy, tart British Bramleys with crisp Cox's creates a melt-in-the-mouth texture

Spiced apple pie with quince jelly

> “Yes, it’s decadent, but a small bowl of this tiramisu is the perfect end to a dinner party”



Raspberry tiramisu

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Raspberry tiramisu

Healthy raspberries are loaded with vitamins, antioxidants and fibre.

PREPARATION TIME: 30 MINUTES, PLUS CHILLING
SERVES 8

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

100ml (4fl oz) strong espresso coffee, cooled
75ml (3fl oz) Tia Maria or Kahlúa
75g (3oz) sponge fingers
25g (1oz) dark chocolate, grated
150g (5oz) fresh raspberries
2 large free-range egg yolks
40g (1½oz) caster sugar
200g (7oz) mascarpone
5tbsp 2% Greek yogurt

you will need:
8 ramekins or glass dishes or a large single dish

1 Mix the coffee and Tia Maria or Kahlúa together in a bowl. Break the sponge fingers in half, dip in the coffee mixture and place in the bottom of the ramekins; use 2 to 3 biscuits per ramekin. Sprinkle over half the grated chocolate and cover with half the raspberries.
2 Whisk the egg yolks with the sugar for 5 minutes using an electric whisk. Add the mascarpone a little at a time and whisk until it's smooth. Fold in the yogurt. Spoon the mascarpone mix over the raspberries and chill overnight.
3 When ready to serve, pop the remaining raspberries on top and sprinkle with the remaining chocolate.
Per serving: 224 calories, 3g fat (8g saturated), 19g carbohydrate

Get ahead
This can be made 48 hours in advance and left in the fridge – decorate before serving

Crunchy berry crumble

Crunchy berry crumble

Nuts are packed full of protein and are a good source of healthy fats too.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 45 MINUTES
SERVES 6

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

75g (3oz) plain flour
50g (2oz) butter
40g (1½oz) demerara sugar, plus a little extra, for the topping
40g (1½oz) light muscovado sugar
25g (1oz) rolled oats
15g (½oz) walnuts, chopped
15g (½oz) hazelnuts, chopped
15g (½oz) Brazil nuts, chopped
250g (9oz) frozen blueberries
250g (9oz) frozen dark forest fruits

1 Heat the oven to 200 C, 180 C fan, 400 F, gas 6. Make the crumble topping by rubbing together the flour and butter until it forms breadcrumbs. Mix through the demerara and muscovado sugars, the rolled oats and all the nuts.
2 Place the frozen berries in a medium ovenproof dish, add a little extra sugar and top with the crumble mixture. Bake for about 40 to 45 minutes, until the crumble is browned and bubbling.
Per serving: 275 calories, 12g fat (5g saturated), 28g carbohydrate

FEEL GOOD+

CRUMBLE KNOW-HOW

The rolled oats are a great feel good topping here, as they are slow-release carbs. You can make extra crumble topping to keep in the freezer for next time – you can cook it from frozen too, no need to defrost first.

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Chocolate fondants

Dark chocolate contains antioxidants, which could help protect against ageing.

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 12 MINUTES
SERVES 6 TO 8

PREPARE AHEAD

melted butter, for greasing
cocoa powder, for dusting
185g (6½oz) high-quality dark chocolate (at least 70% cocoa solids)
150g (5oz) unsalted butter
275g (9½oz) caster sugar
½tsp vanilla extract
4 medium free-range eggs, beaten
125g (4½oz) plain flour, sifted
icing sugar, for dusting

you will need:

6 to 8 small ramekins

1 Heat the oven to 180 C, 160 C fan, 350 F, gas 4. Brush the ramekins sparingly with the melted butter, dust with the cocoa powder and shake out the excess. Set aside. Melt the chocolate and butter gently in a saucepan. Remove from the heat and stir in the sugar and vanilla extract. Leave to cool slightly.

2 Whisk the eggs into the mixture a little at a time, then fold in the sifted flour and a little salt until you have a smooth mixture.

3 Divide the mixture between the ramekins – filling each one until it's two-thirds full. Place them on the middle shelf of the oven and cook for 10 minutes exactly.

4 Remove the fondants from the oven, run a knife around the edges, invert and tip out on to serving plates. Dust with a sprinkling of icing sugar and serve immediately with half-fat crème fraîche, if you like.

Per serving: 484 calories, 25g fat (14g saturated), 62g carbohydrate

FONDANT KNOW-HOW

If you're making these for a dinner party and are nervous about getting the cooking time just right, make one more fondant than you need (use less mixture in each ramekin) and check it after 8 minutes. You can use it to judge how much longer the others will need. To get ahead, you can leave the uncooked mixture in the ramekins for up to two days – just bring to room temperature before baking.

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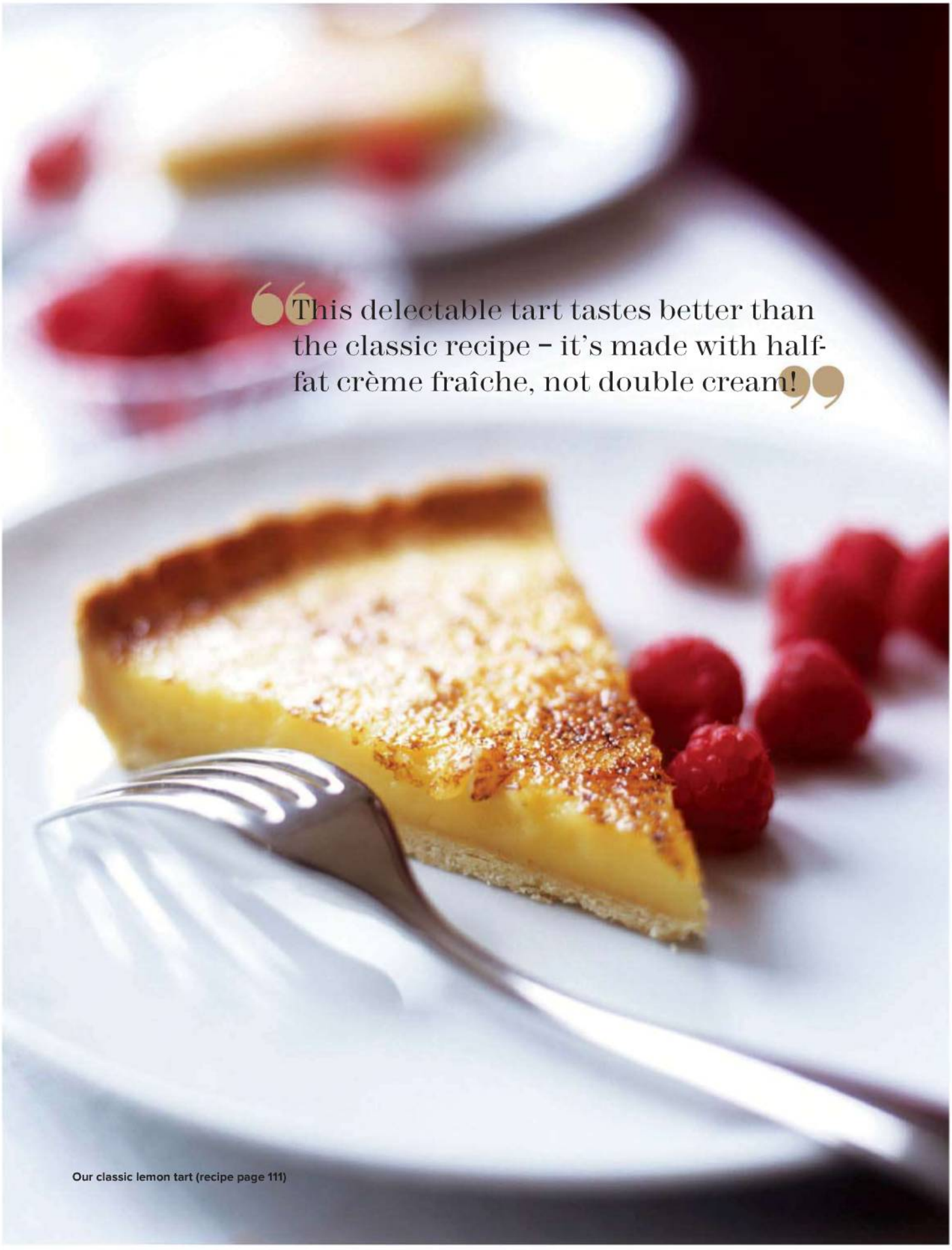

Our classic lemon tart (recipe page 111)

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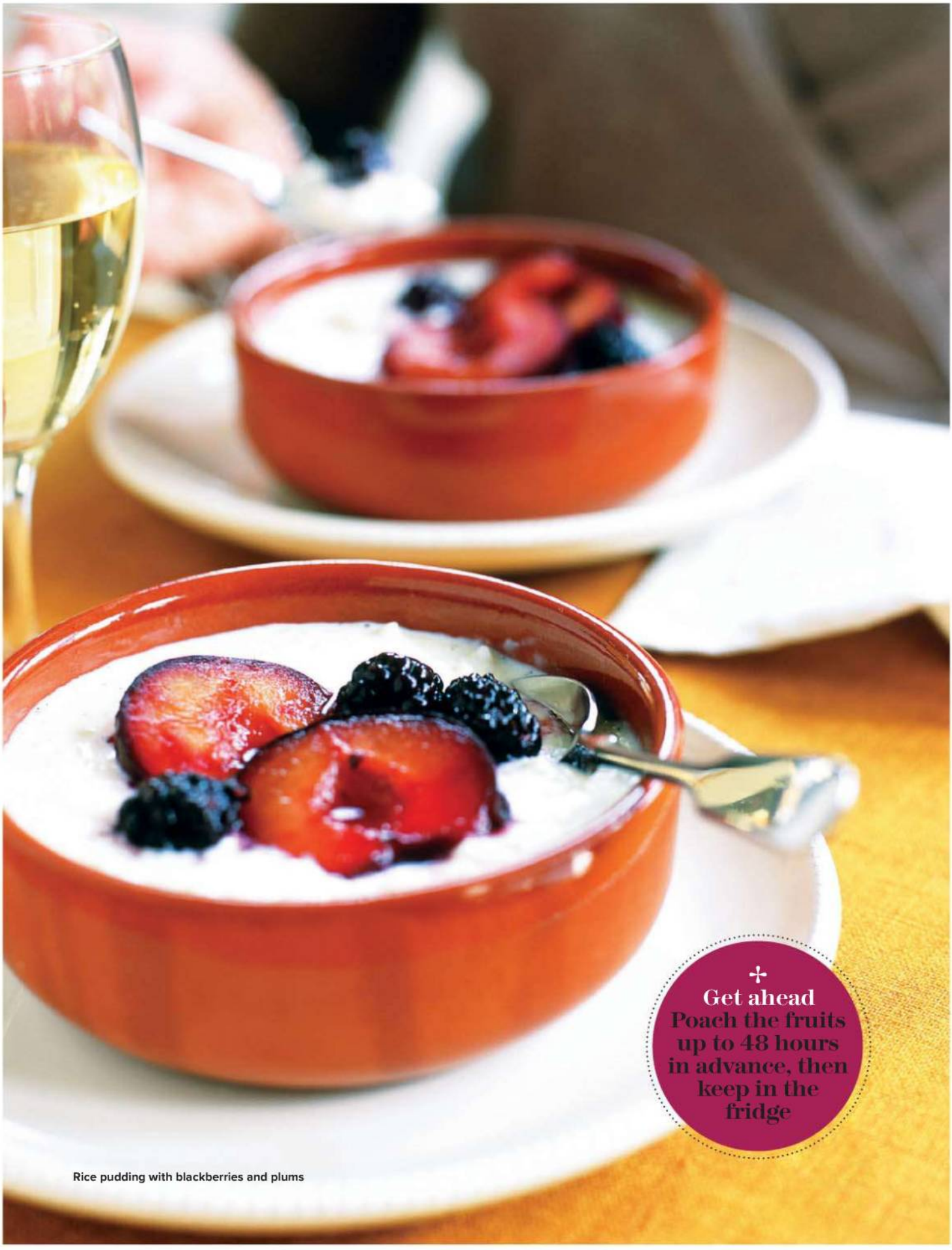

Get ahead
Poach the fruits up to 48 hours in advance, then keep in the fridge

Rice pudding with blackberries and plums

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Rice pudding with blackberries and plums

This calcium-rich classic British dessert is given a feel good boost with fresh fruits.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 30 MINUTES
SERVES 6

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

250g (9oz) caster sugar
6 ripe plums, halved and stoned
250g (9oz) blackberries
1.5 litres (2¾pt) full-fat milk
1 vanilla pod, split lengthwise
200g (7oz) pudding rice, washed
100ml (4fl oz) half-fat crème fraîche
1tsp vanilla extract

1 Pour 100g (4oz) of the sugar into a pan with 300ml (½pt) water and bring to the boil. When the syrup is boiling, add the plums. Place a piece of greaseproof paper and a small plate on top of the plums to keep them submerged and simmer for about 5 minutes, until they're cooked. Remove the pan from the heat.
2 Remove the plums from the hot syrup and add the blackberries. Remove after 1 minute and allow the syrup to cool, then return all the fruit to the syrup.
3 Boil the milk and vanilla pod in a heavy-based pan. Add the rice to the milk in a steady stream. Simmer for 15 to 20 minutes, stirring frequently. When the rice is tender, remove the vanilla pod and scrape the seeds into the rice. Stir in the remaining sugar; add the crème fraîche and vanilla extract. Serve with the fruit and some poaching syrup.
Per serving: 493 calories, 13g fat (8g saturated), 87g carbohydrate

Our classic lemon tart

This is far less decadent than you'd think – and even more delicious.

PREPARATION TIME: 45 MINUTES, PLUS CHILLING
COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR 40 MINUTES
SERVES 8

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

for the pastry:
175g (6oz) plain flour
40g (1½oz) icing sugar
75g (3oz) butter, chilled
1 large free-range egg yolk
1 large free-range egg, beaten
for the filling:
2 large free-range eggs
4 large free-range egg yolks
175g (6oz) caster sugar
200ml (7fl oz) half-fat crème fraîche
juice 2 lemons
icing sugar, for dusting
you will need:
23cm (9in) loose-bottomed fluted tart tin, greased, and baking beans

1 For the pastry, put the flour, icing sugar and butter into a food processor and blitz until you have fine breadcrumbs. Add the egg yolk, whizz for 30 seconds, then add 1tbsp cold water and whizz for another 30 seconds, until it starts to come together. (Don't over-process or the pastry will be tough.) Turn out on to a floured surface, knead into a ball and flatten slightly. Wrap in clingfilm and chill for at least 30 minutes.
2 Heat the oven to 190 C, 170 C fan, 375 F, gas 5. Roll out the pastry between 2 pieces of clingfilm and use to line the tin, leaving the excess to hang over the edges. Prick the surface gently with a fork, line with baking parchment and fill with baking beans. Put in the fridge for at least 20 minutes or in the freezer until needed. Place the pastry-lined tart tin on a baking sheet and bake blind for 15 minutes or until the pastry is beginning to colour. Remove the parchment paper and baking beans, brush with the beaten egg and place back in the oven for another 10 minutes, or until the pastry is lightly golden. Remove and leave to cool slightly before carefully trimming the edges with a sharp knife to the level of the top of the tin.
3 Reduce the oven to 110 C, 90 C fan, 225 F, gas ¼. Whisk the eggs, egg yolks and sugar in a bowl, then stir in the crème fraîche. Add the lemon juice and pour into a jug.
4 Pour half the filling into the pastry case. Place the tin on the bottom shelf of the oven. Pull the shelf out halfway, keeping the tin level, and pour in the remaining filling. Push the shelf back and bake for 1 hour 15 minutes or until the filling is slightly wobbly in the centre. Leave in the tin to cool.
5 Transfer the tart to a large plate and dust generously with icing sugar. You can use a blowtorch to "brûler" the sugar if you have one. Serve with fresh raspberries.
Per serving: 370 calories, 18g fat (9g saturated), 47g carbohydrate

Roasted port plums

Roasted port plums

Heat the oven to 190 C, 170 C fan, 375 F, gas 5. Using an apple corer, remove and discard the stones from 12 large, red-fleshed plums. Take 6 vanilla pods and halve lengthways and crossways. Put 200g (7oz) ground almonds, 75g (3oz) icing sugar, 4tsp orange or lemon zest shreds and ½ to 1tbsp orange flower water into a food processor and whizz to a crumbly paste. Pinch this marzipan tightly into a ball, roll into 12 equal balls and elongate each into an oval. Push 1 oval into each plum, then push 2 vanilla pieces into each marzipan oval. Stand the plums in a roasting pan and drizzle 100ml (4fl oz) port around them. Roast for 10 minutes or until the fruit is fragrant, soft and bubbling. Serve with crème fraîche. Serves 4 to 6.
Per serving: 456-304 calories, 28-18g fat (2-1.5g saturated), 35-23g carbohydrate

Try these combinations

- Pears in Marsala
- Peaches in Muscat
- Apples in cider
- Nectarines in white port
- Or use grape or apple juice

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AS JAMIE SAYS, HE "COULDN'T DO A CHAPTER ON FRENCH FOOD WITHOUT INCLUDING A GOOD HANDFUL OF THEIR EXCITING DESSERTS." THIS TART, WHICH TURNS AN ORDINARY PUMPKIN INTO A GLORIOUS SWEET TREAT, IS JUST ONE OF THEM. "THE SIMPLEST, MOST HUMBLE COOKING IS OFTEN THE BEST," SAYS THE CHEF.

JAMIE OLIVER'S
Pumpkin tart

I stumbled across this beautiful dessert, or at least one element of it, at a fantastic little restaurant called Lou Bourdie in a village called Bach. Monique, the lovely owner, had baked a trayful of a delicious pumpkin dessert, and was serving small squares of it to her customers. The sweet pumpkin mixture had cooked and set like a sort of rustic crème caramel, and it was so delicious I had to make my own version. I've put mine into a pastry tart, because that contrast between short crumbly pastry and soft silky filling is magic. Enjoy!

PREPARATION TIME: 30 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR 30 MINUTES
SERVES 12

PREPARE AHEAD

for the pastry:
250g (9oz) plain flour, plus extra for dusting
50g (2oz) icing sugar
125g (4½oz) good-quality unsalted cold butter, cut into small cubes
1 large egg, preferably free-range or organic, beaten
splash of milk
olive oil, for greasing the tart tin
for the filling:
1 x 500g (1lb 2oz) pumpkin, peeled, deseeded and diced into 2cm (¾in) chunks
500ml (18fl oz) full-fat milk
200g (7oz) golden caster sugar
1 vanilla pod, halved lengthways and seeds scraped out
2 large eggs, preferably free-range or organic

1 You can make your own pastry by hand, or in a food processor. From a height, sieve your flour and icing sugar into a large mixing bowl. Using your fingertips, gently work the butter into the flour and sugar until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Add the egg and milk and gently work it together using your hands, until you have a ball. Don't work the pastry too much or it will become elastic and chewy, not crumbly and short.
2 Sprinkle some flour over the dough and a clean work surface, and pat the ball into a thick flat round. Sprinkle over a little more flour, then wrap the pastry in clingfilm and pop it into the fridge to rest for 30 minutes. Lightly oil the inside of a 25cm (9¾in) non-stick loose-bottomed tart tin. Dust a clean surface and a rolling pin with flour, and carefully roll out your pastry, turning and dusting it every so often, until you've got a circle about 0.5cm (¼in) thick. Roll the pastry over the rolling pin, then unroll it into into the tin, making sure you push it into the sides. Trim off any extra and use that to patch any holes, then prick the base of the case all over with a fork, cover with clingfilm, and pop it into the freezer for 30 minutes. Heat your oven to 180 C, 160 C fan, 350 F, gas 4.
3 Meanwhile, put the pumpkin, milk, sugar, vanilla pod and its seeds into a small, deep pan on a medium heat. Keep stirring so nothing catches, and turn the heat down to low just as it comes to the boil. Simmer for about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, then put a lid half on and cook for a further 15 minutes, or until the pumpkin is tender and cooked through. Remove from the heat, discard the vanilla pod, and use a hand blender to carefully blitz until silky and smooth. Put aside to cool and pop the lid on the pan to stop a skin forming.
4 While your pumpkin mixture cools, lay a large piece of greaseproof paper over your pastry case, pushing it right into the sides. Fill the case right up to the top with uncooked rice, and bake blind for 10 minutes, until it's firm and almost biscuit-like. Leave to cool completely, and turn down the oven to 160 C, 140 C fan, 325 F, gas 3.
5 Beat the 2 eggs together, add them to the pumpkin mixture and blitz again. Pour this mixture into your pastry case then bake in the hot oven for around 30 minutes, or until the mixture has set but still has a slight wobble to it. Leave to cool, then serve with a drizzle of cream or a spoonful of crème fraîche and dive in.
Per serving: 287 calories, 12g fat (7g saturated), 41g carbohydrate

JAMIE DOES... (PENGUIN, £26)
The celebrated chef's new cookbook accompanies his Channel 4 series of the same name, which sees him journeying around the globe on a voyage of food discovery. With recipes from Spain, Italy, Sweden, Morocco, Greece and France, there are plenty of adventurous dishes to try out. What's more, with Jamie's clever and unique twists on classic dishes, you can recreate everything from a paella to a risotto with utmost authenticity.

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Jamie Oliver's Pumpkin tart

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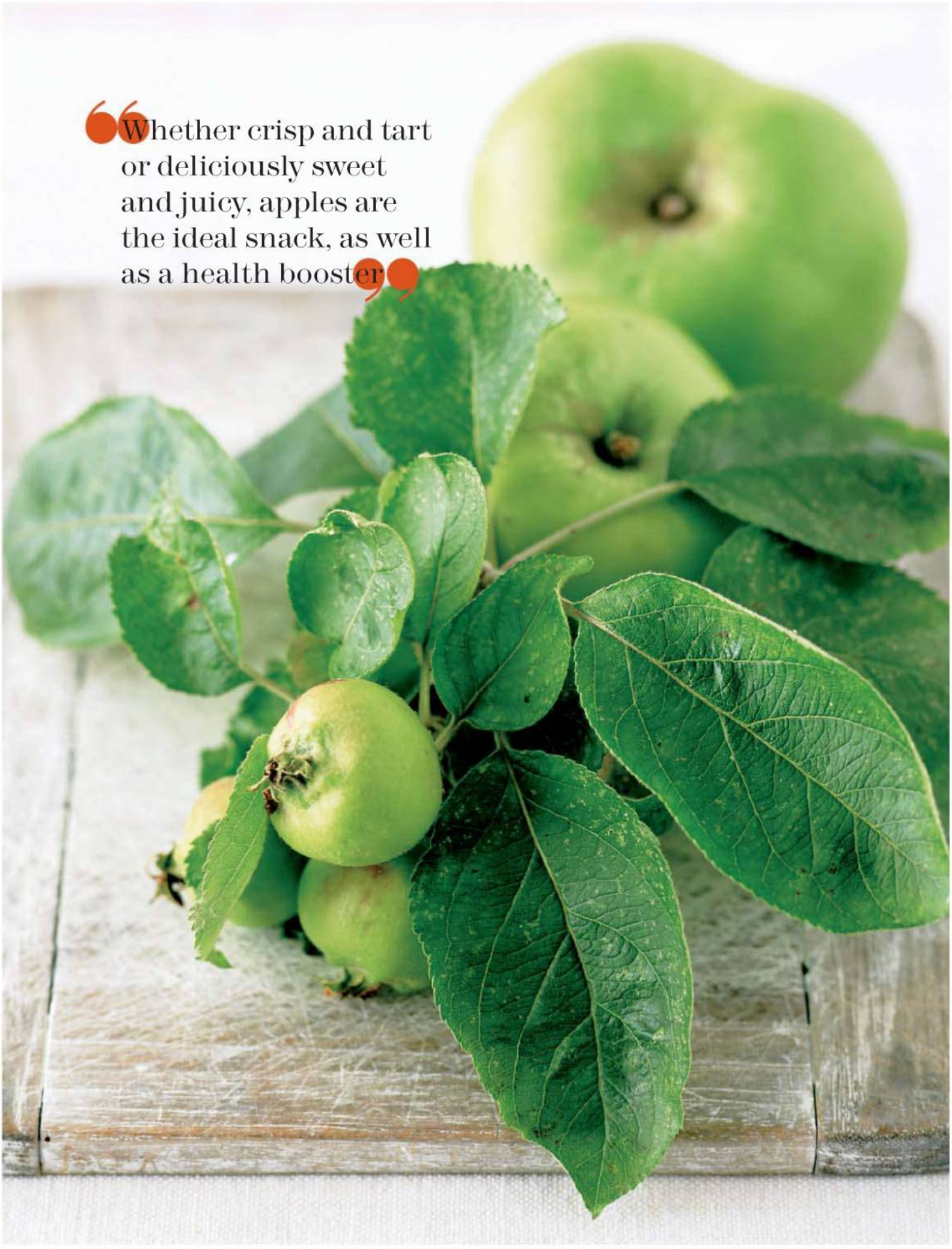

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An apple a day

We're told that an apple a day keeps the doctor away, but does the old adage carry any truth? We think it does and here are ten reasons why...

Eating apples as part of a healthy diet is thought to help prevent a range of serious illnesses, such as:

- **Asthma** Research by the National Heart and Lung Institute showed that asthmatic children, who drank apple juice daily, suffered less from wheezing than those who only drank it once a month. Another study showed that children whose mothers had eaten a lot of apples during pregnancy were less likely to develop asthma than those whose mothers ate fewer apples.
- **Lung cancer** A study of 10,000 people showed that those who ate the most apples had a 50 per cent lower risk of developing lung cancer. It is believed to be largely due to the high levels of the flavonoids quercetin and naringin present in them.
- **Colon cancer** Studies have been done on rats that suggest that those fed on apple skins had a 43 per cent lower risk of developing colon cancer. At the very least, research shows that the pectin in apples helps maintain a healthy digestive tract, which will help to reduce the risk of colon cancer.
- **Breast cancer** According to American research, eating one apple a day could help reduce the risk of breast cancer by up to 17 per cent.
- **Liver cancer** Research has been carried out to show that eating apples can reduce the risk of liver cancer by up to 57 per cent.
- **Alzheimer's** Studies on mice at Cornell University found that apples may protect brain cells from the kind of free-radical damage that can lead to Alzheimer's disease.

Apples are also believed to assist in:

- **Lowering cholesterol** The pectin found in apples helps to lower "bad" cholesterol. Eating just two apples a day could lower your cholesterol by at least 16 per cent.
- **Keeping bones healthy** It has been suggested that apple flavonoids (a type of antioxidant) could help protect post-menopausal women from osteoporosis, and could also help to increase bone density.
- **Managing diabetes** The pectin in apples lowers the body's need for insulin, which can help with diabetes management.
- **Helping weight loss** A Brazilian study found that women, who ate three apples or pears per day while dieting, lost more weight than those who ate no fruit. Eating a small piece of apple before bedtime will also help to keep your metabolism working overnight, thereby aiding the weight loss.

It seems then that apples are the modest heroes of the fruit world – portable, easy to eat and indisputably good for you. But don't just eat them raw – they're incredibly versatile and different varieties work fabulously in cooking.

BRAEBURN

This sweet, green and red apple is a gorgeous muncher because of its crisp texture and sweet, juicy flavour. Its natural sweetness also makes it perfect for apple sauce and means it needs virtually no sugar when cooked.

PINK LADY

Known as the Champagne apple because of its effervescent flavour, this beautiful blush-pink apple is one of our favourites to use in baking. With just the right mix of sweetness and acidity, it doesn't lose its flavour when mixed into cakes.

RUSSETS

This term covers many different varieties of apple, all of which have a "russeting", or a rough, brownish covering, which can partially or entirely cover the apple. Usually very sweet, Russets can have a nutty quality. Gorgeous eaten with hard cheese such as aged Cheddar, they are also lovely stuffed with currants, spices and brown sugar, and baked as an autumnal dessert.

COX'S ORANGE PIPPIN

First grown in Buckinghamshire by Mr Cox in the 1820s, Cox's Orange Pippins now account for over 50 per cent of the UK acreage of dessert apples. Sweet and crunchy when first picked, we love these studded with star anise and baked with roast pork as an alternative to apple sauce.

BRAMLEY

The best all-round cooking apple, Bramleys are liable to give you a stomachache if eaten raw! Their tart flavour and firm texture mellows when cooked and, if you're baking a pie or a crumble, it's a good idea to use a mixture of Bramleys and dessert apples to achieve the best balance of flavour.

There are hundreds of other apple varieties – good supermarkets will stock seasonal apple varieties but, to find the best, it's worth looking at farmers' markets or farm shops. Or visit natoora.co.uk, a speciality food site, or abelandcole.co.uk, which delivers organic fruit and veg boxes weekly to your door.

For more information on healthy eating and the latest diets, visit womanandhome.com.

WORDS REBECCA SMITH

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Irresistible baking

Home-made is back with a vengeance, and we all agree that nothing makes a home seem more welcoming than the smell of baking in the air. When making your own, you know exactly what's gone into the final product, and our cakes, scones, muffins and breads are packed with feel good ingredients too. As always, practise portion control when faced with a cake!

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PHOTOGRAPH RICHARD JUNG **PROP STYLING** SUE ROWLANDS

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> Three dainty, fabulous cupcakes – make one, or more, and you'll give your tea party a real feel good factor

Sticky toffee cakes with salted caramel buttercream

A butterless sponge – and so easy too, just measure everything in the yogurt pot!

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 15 MINUTES
MAKES 12

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD / FREEZE

120g pot natural yogurt
1 x yogurt pot sunflower oil
2 x yogurt pots light muscovado sugar
3 large free-range eggs
3 x yogurt pots self-raising flour
1tsp baking powder
for the frosting:
100g (4oz) unsalted butter, softened
75g (3oz) full-fat Philadelphia cream cheese
150g (5oz) icing sugar
3tbsp Carnation Caramel or dulce de leche
1tsp sea salt
you will need:
12-hole muffin tin, lined with paper cases

1 Heat the oven to 180 C, 160 C fan, 350 F, gas 4. Using a hand whisk, beat the yogurt, oil and sugar together, add the eggs, then fold in the flour and baking powder with a pinch of salt. Divide the mix between the paper cases; cook in the middle of the oven for about 15 minutes, until risen and springy. Remove, and cool on a wire rack.
2 Meanwhile, make the frosting. Cream the butter, cream cheese and icing sugar together with an electric whisk for at least 5 minutes, then add the caramel and sea salt. Transfer to a piping bag fitted with a star nozzle, and pipe swirls on to each cupcake. Decorate with sprinkles of muscovado sugar.
Per cupcake: 418 calories, 20g fat (8g saturated), 53g carbohydrate

Pear and almond cakes with vanilla frosting

Using our layer cake mixture, these cakes have the added goodness of fruit and nuts.

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 20 MINUTES
MAKES 12

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD / FREEZE

150g (5oz) caster sugar
150g (5oz) unsalted butter, softened
2 large free-range eggs
½ x 415g tin pears, drained and puréed
½tsp almond essence
150g (5oz) self-raising flour
50g (2oz) ground almonds
for the frosting:
300g (10oz) full-fat Philadelphia cream cheese
250g (9oz) icing sugar
1tsp vanilla extract
raspberries and chocolate sprinkles, to decorate
you will need:
12-hole muffin tin, lined with paper cases

1 Heat the oven to 180 C, 160 C fan, 350 F, gas 4. Cream the sugar and butter together until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, followed by the pear purée and almond essence. Don't worry if the mixture curdles, it will come back together when you add the flour.
2 Fold in the flour and almonds with a pinch of salt, and spoon the mixture into the paper cases. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, until the mix is risen and springy. Remove from the oven and cool on a wire rack.
3 While they're cooling, mix the cream cheese with the icing sugar and vanilla extract, and transfer to a piping bag fitted with a star nozzle. When the cakes are cool, pipe swirls on to each, and top with a raspberry and some chocolate sprinkles. Serve immediately, or on the same day.
Per cupcake: 414 calories, 25g fat (14g saturated), 42g carbohydrate

Mini carrot cakes with lemon frosting

These little cakes are packed full of good stuff – plus there's no butter in the mix!

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 15 MINUTES
MAKES 12

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD / FREEZE

175g (6oz) plain flour
50g (2oz) wholemeal flour
½tbsp bicarbonate of soda
1tbsp ground cinnamon
150g (5oz) unrefined caster sugar
½tbsp pure vanilla extract
50g (2oz) chopped walnuts
50g (2oz) desiccated coconut
50g (2oz) sultanas
150g (5oz) carrots, grated
125g (4½oz) tinned pineapple chunks, drained and puréed
150ml (¼pt) light vegetable oil or other flavourless oil
2 large free-range eggs, lightly beaten
for the frosting:
500g (1lb 2oz) full-fat Philadelphia cream cheese
300g (10oz) icing sugar
juice 1 lemon
you will need:
12-hole muffin tin, lined with paper cases

1 Heat the oven to 180 C, 160 C fan, 350 F, gas 4. Sift the flour, bicarbonate of soda and cinnamon with a pinch of salt, then add the sugar, vanilla, nuts, fruit and carrots. Mix the pineapple, oil and eggs together; stir into the flour mixture, then spoon into the cake cases. Bake in the middle of the oven for 15 minutes, until risen. Remove and cool.
2 Meanwhile, make the frosting. Beat the cream cheese, sugar and lemon juice together until smooth. Using a piping bag with a star nozzle, pipe swirls of icing on to the cakes and decorate with sugar sprinkles.
Per cupcake: 568 calories, 36g fat (16g saturated), 55g carbohydrate

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Get ahead
Iced cakes will keep in the fridge for 2 days; un-iced ones for a month in the freezer

Mini carrot cakes with lemon frosting

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COOK'S TIP

To successfully pipe icing, you need to use a full-fat cream cheese and a good piping bag. We love Lakeland's disposable ones – there's no washing-up afterwards! See lakeland.co.uk.

Sticky toffee cakes with salted caramel buttercream (recipe page 118)

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“To up your vitamin-c intake, just pile raspberries on as cake decorations – they look gorgeous and they’re fantastically good for you too!”

Pear and almond cakes with vanilla frosting (recipe page 118)

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Baking know-how

When it comes to baking cakes, as a rule, there's nothing very complicated. But so many people complain that their cake didn't work, which then puts them off trying to bake one again. There are a few very simple rules and guidelines that will help you to achieve the perfect cake and amaze your guests:

- First of all, invest in an oven thermometer (from *lakeland.co.uk*, *johnlewis.com* and good cook shops). You would be amazed how ovens can vary quite considerably, despite what the dial says. Look for one with a wide range to accommodate high temperatures.
- Always use the exact-size cake tin as specified in the recipe. Measure the base of the cake tin, not the top, and don't disregard the depth specified, either. Check out our top suppliers on page 125.
- Bake any cake in the centre of the oven, unless the recipe specifies otherwise. It should not touch the sides of the oven, either.
- You can't double or halve cake recipes as you would do with a casserole or a savoury dish. Nor can you decrease or increase ingredients by percentages to fit a different-sized tin.
- Always sift flour, whether the recipe says so or not. It'll eliminate any lumps and, more importantly, incorporate air into the mixture.
- A fine skewer is a good way to test whether or not your cake is cooked through. Insert it into the centre of the cake and it should come out clean, without any sticky mixture.

Pear and almond cake with sweetened yogurt

Blending fruit purées into cakes is an excellent way to top up your vitamins.

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR
SERVES 12 TO 16

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD / FREEZE

275g (9½oz) unsalted butter, softened
275g (9½oz) golden caster sugar
4 large free-range eggs
415g tin pears, drained and puréed
½tsp almond extract
275g (9½oz) self-raising flour
1tsp baking powder
100g (4oz) ground almonds
for the icing:
500g (1lb 2oz) Greek yogurt
1tsp vanilla extract
3 to 4tbsp icing sugar, to taste
3tbsp low-sugar raspberry jam
you will need:
23cm (9in) springform cake tin, bottom-lined and oiled
raspberries, to serve

1 Heat the oven to 170 C, 150 C fan, 325 F, gas 3. Using an electric whisk, cream together the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, then beat in the pear purée and almond extract. Don't worry if the mixture curdles, it will come back together when you add the flour. Fold in the flour, baking powder and almonds with a pinch of salt. Transfer the batter to the cake tin.

2 Bake in the centre of the oven for 1 hour, or until the cake is risen and springy to the touch. A skewer inserted into the middle should come out clean. Remove from the oven, leave in the tin for 5 minutes, then turn out on to a wire rack and leave to cool upside down to flatten out the top slightly.

3 To decorate, slice the cake into 3 layers. Mix the yogurt with the vanilla extract and icing sugar until smooth. Spread half the jam on to the cut side of the bottom layer, and top with a third of the yogurt. Repeat with the next layer, then top with the final layer, and spread with the remaining yogurt. Pile the raspberries in the middle and serve.

Per serving: 507-380 calories, 31-23g fat (16-12g saturated), 48-36g carbohydrate

Chocolate yogurt cake with mascarpone frosting

Yogurt (and oil) make this lower in saturated fat, and the tub doubles as a measure too.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 40 MINUTES
SERVES 12

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD / FREEZE

2 x 120g pots natural yogurt
2 pots sunflower oil or light olive oil
4 pots golden caster sugar
6 large free-range eggs
4½ pots self-raising flour
1½ pots good-quality cocoa powder
1tsp baking powder
for the frosting:
250g (9oz) mascarpone
250g (9oz) Greek yogurt
4 to 5tbsp icing sugar, to taste
chocolate curls, to decorate
you will need:
2 x 18cm (7in) loose-based sandwich tins, bottom-lined and oiled

1 Heat the oven to 170 C, 150 C fan, 325 F, gas 3. With a hand whisk, mix together the yogurt, oil, sugar and eggs, then fold in the flour, cocoa and baking powder with a generous pinch of salt.

2 Pour into the prepared tins and bake for around 40 minutes, or until a skewer inserted into the middle of the cakes comes out clean. Remove from the oven, leave to cool for 5 minutes, then remove from the tins and cool completely on a wire rack.

3 Meanwhile, make the frosting. Whisk together the mascarpone, yogurt and icing sugar until smooth and set aside.

4 When the cakes are completely cool, slice both in half horizontally. Lay the top slice of 1 cake, cut side up, on a cake stand, and spread with a ¼ of the icing. Place the bottom half of the cake on top, cut side down, and spread the top with another ¼ of the icing. Lay the bottom half of the second cake, cut side up, on top, repeat with the icing, then top with the last half, cut side down, and top with the rest of the icing. Decorate with chocolate curls.

Per serving: 670 calories, 33g fat (12g saturated), 80g carbohydrate

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Chocolate yogurt cake with mascarpone frosting

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> Make sure you use a reduced-sugar jam, which contains roughly half the calories of normal jam

Pear and almond cake with sweetened yogurt (recipe page 122)

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Plum and apple ring cake

Soluble fibre in oats is believed to be helpful in lowering blood cholesterol levels.

PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 40 MINUTES
SERVES 10

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD

for the cake:
185g (6½oz) unsalted butter
185g (6½oz) soft, light-brown sugar
3 large free-range eggs, whisked
2 large dessert apples, grated
185g (6½oz) plain flour
2tsp ground cinnamon
1tsp mixed spice
to glaze:
2tbsp each apricot jam and lemon juice
for the topping:
3 ripe plums, plus extra to serve
25g (1oz) unsalted butter
35g (1¼oz) dark muscovado sugar
50g (2oz) jumbo oats
you will need:
24cm (9½in) diameter cake-ring tin, oiled

1 Heat the oven to 180 C, 160 C fan, 350 F, gas 4. To make the topping, pit and slice three plums, then arrange the slices around the base of the cake-ring tin. Melt the butter. Mix the muscovado sugar and the oats, add the melted butter, then mix again. Sprinkle on top of the plums.
2 For the cake, cream the butter and sugar together until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs, one by one, mixing well after each addition. Fold in the apples, flour and spices, with a good pinch of salt, and transfer to the cake tin. Bake for 40 minutes until lightly golden and fragrant. A skewer inserted in the middle should come out clean. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then turn out on to a rack.
3 Heat the jam and lemon juice gently together to form a glaze, and drizzle it over the warm cake. Serve filled with fresh, whole plums to form a centrepiece.
Per serving: 374 calories, 20g fat (12g saturated), 41g carbohydrate

Plum and apple ring cake

Cook's tip
Adding fresh fruit to a cake mixture gives it a really moist texture

Great suppliers

We do so much baking and cake decorating in our test kitchen at w&h that we've become quite the experts on where to source the more specialist or difficult-to-find items. Here are our favourites:

- Squires Kitchen (*squires-shop.com*; 0845-2255671) is a one-stop shop for cake decorating. They sell the most fantastic cupcake cases and loaf cases in all sorts of patterns and colours, and have a huge range of pre-made decorations and colours.
- Lakeland (*lakeland.co.uk*) is the place to go for cake tins, cases and much more. Their disposable piping bags are a must-have for keen bakers, and they're also a one-stop shop for budding bread bakers. They sell bread machines, even baguette trays and pre-made bread mixes for machines or hand baking.
- Lawsons (*lawsonshop.co.uk*; 01752-897384) has everything the cake decorator and baker could ever need. They have a huge range of cake tins, loaf tins and flan tins, plus a good spread of cake decorations, ornaments and food colours.
- Amazon (*amazon.co.uk*) boasts a huge kitchenware offering and high-end baking tools, including a selection of silicone bakeware.

Other specialists to try:
janeasher.co.uk *divertimenti.co.uk* *sugarshack.co.uk*

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CHEF AND MARATHON-RUNNER GORDON IS AN ADVERTISEMENT FOR GOOD HEALTH. HE SAYS THAT CHOOSING THE RIGHT INGREDIENTS IS THE CORE TO HEALTHY EATING. MAKING LITTLE CHANGES, LIKE IN THIS RECIPE WHERE HIGH-FIBRE WHOLEMEAL FLOUR IS USED RATHER THAN WHITE FLOUR, AND HEALTHY OLIVE OIL IS USED INSTEAD OF BUTTER, IS KEY.

> "Healthy eating is a topic close to my heart. With a little effort, anyone can improve their diet and lifestyle"

GORDON RAMSAY'S

Wholemeal blueberry muffins

A big part of living a good life is the enjoyment of food, so make these delicious, fruity muffins for breakfast, or a mid-morning snack. Containing one of the original superfoods, blueberries – which are rich in antioxidants – make this recipe gorgeously moist.

PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 25 MINUTES
MAKES 12

EASY / PREPARE AHEAD / FREEZE

2 very large ripe bananas
300g (10oz) wholemeal flour
1½tsp baking powder
1tsp bicarbonate of soda
pinch of fine sea salt
100g (4oz) light muscovado or brown sugar
284ml carton buttermilk
1 large free-range egg, lightly beaten
75g (3oz) light olive oil
200g (7oz) blueberries, rinsed and drained
1tbsp demerara sugar

1 Heat the oven to 180 C, 160 C fan, 350 F, gas 4. Line a 12-hole muffin tin with muffin cases. Peel the bananas and mash in a bowl, using a fork.
2 Mix the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, salt and brown sugar together in a large mixing bowl. Make a well in the centre and add the buttermilk, egg, olive oil and bananas. Quickly fold the ingredients together until just incorporated, taking care not to overmix. Tip in the blueberries and give the batter 1 or 2 stirs.
3 Spoon the batter into the muffin cases and sprinkle with the demerara sugar. The cases will be quite full. Bake in the oven for about 20 to 25 minutes, until well risen and golden brown on top; a skewer inserted into the centre of the muffin should emerge clean.
4 Leave to cool in the tin for a couple of minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.
Per serving: 195 calories, 6g fat (1g saturated), 31g carbohydrate

***GORDON RAMSAY'S HEALTHY APPETITE: RECIPES FROM THE F WORD* (QUADRILLE, £20)**
The super-fit Michelin-starred chef, and high-energy TV presenter provides recipes that are packed with flavour, but not with calories. Gordon rejects the idea that healthy food should be dull, instead offering recipes that are both delicious, easy to prepare and cooked in a healthy way. Gordon says, "When it comes to putting a healthy dish together, balance and moderation is key."

MAIN PHOTOGRAPH LISA BARBER

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Gordon Ramsay's Wholemeal blueberry muffins

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Recommended suppliers

We like to recommend websites here just because you don't want to start lugging heavy jars and huge pans home on public transport. Though of course, good kitchen shops and department stores such as John Lewis will have a full stock.

- **lakeland.co.uk** Absolutely everything you will ever need in the preserving world.
- **jamjarshop.com** This website does what is says on the tin, or should we say jar!
- **preserveshop.co.uk** For all the preserving kit you need.
- **johnlewis.com** Very efficient home delivery.

"Fruit's pectin helps jam set, and is thought to reduce the risk of heart disease and the formation of gallstones"

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Well preserved!

Until recently, preserving was a rather forgotten art, says Editor Jane Curran. But with the increase in popularity of nostalgic, "comfort" skills such as knitting and baking, preserving has found itself fashionable again

When we say "preserving", we're not taking you down the road of curing meats and salting fish! We're concentrating on making jams and chutneys to show how simple it can be if you follow a few easy steps. And, in these days of fast food, it's rather comforting to make something that can be kept or given as a gift. In late summer and early autumn, there are plenty of ingredients to choose from. Remember that the sugar in jam and chutney, which also has vinegar, acts as a preserving agent, so as long as you sterilise your jars properly (see below), all your filled jars can be stored in a cool, dark place, not the fridge. Chutneys need a little ageing to mellow their initial sharpness, so you can get cracking now if you want to get ahead for Christmas.

THE EQUIPMENT

The preserving pan is a bit of an investment, but the other bits of kit won't break the bank.

A preserving pan is crucial, especially for making jam, as it prevents it from boiling over the top and making a huge mess. It will also have a heavy base, which prevents chutney from sticking to the bottom of the pan when you boil it. And it's handy for boiling a huge Christmas gammon, too!

I would advise a sugar thermometer if you begin to make jam on a regular basis. It also comes in handy if you're making caramels and fudges.

In these green days, you can save your jars and lids rather than sending them to the recycling, or get friends and family to save theirs. If you want to buy pretty jars to give as gifts, see our stockists list, left.

A preserving funnel makes the job a lot easier. It is used for potting and really does save you a lot of cleaning up.

A long-handled wooden spoon is a must because it keeps your hand and arm away from the hot, bubbling jam or chutney while you are stirring.

THE BASIC IDEA

Making jam Jam is such a simple food, a mixture of fruit and sugar with the option of flavourings, such as spices or herbs, being added. As you know, what makes jam set is a substance called pectin.

Fruit that are high in pectin are:
Cooking apples, damsons, cranberries, citrus fruit, redcurrants, blackcurrants and quince.

Fruit that have a medium pectin content are:
Raspberries, plums and greengages, blackberries, dessert apples.

Fruit that are low in pectin are:
Strawberries, bananas, pears, peaches, grapes, cherries, figs.

So, basically, if you are making jam with a low-pectin fruit, either use sugar with added pectin (widely available) or add a fruit from the high-pectin list. This is why redcurrants are often added to strawberry jam, along with a little lemon juice.

The basic technique for making jam is to cook down the fruit in your preserving pan, add the sugar, let it dissolve, then boil until you reach a set. I prefer to warm the sugar (in a baking tin in a low oven) before adding it to the fruit, as it speeds up the process and keeps more of the natural fruit flavours.

You can make jam with fruit sugars, such as Fruisana. Fruit sugar (fructose) is much sweeter than cane sugar, so you use less of it. See **fruisana.co.uk** for fruit sugar recipes for jams and chutneys.

CHUTNEY

When making chutney, you don't need to worry about setting or pectin, so it's the easiest thing to start with. All you need is a good recipe, a good pan and some pretty jars – well sterilised!

STERILISING JARS

As I always make a batch of around eight jars per recipe, I find it simpler to sterilise them in the oven. This sounds complicated, but it's literally just a case of putting clean jars in a low oven to kill off any bacteria, and potting, whether jam or chutney, into a warm jar for the same reason.

Blackcurrant jam

Make your own jam with our simple recipe. Making jam doesn't have to be difficult – blackcurrant jam is easy, because it always sets. This recipe makes around 4.5kg (10lb) jam.

1.8kg (4lb) blackcurrants
1.7 litres (3pt) water
2.7kg (6lb) granulated sugar, warmed
small knob butter

1 Leave the blackcurrants to soak in a sink filled with cold water. Pull them off their stalks and put into a preserving pan with the water. Bring to the boil and simmer, uncovered, for about 40 minutes, until the fruit has softened and the water reduced.

2 Add the warmed sugar, stirring until the sugar has dissolved, bringing it up to a gentle boil. Let it bubble for 10 minutes then test for a set – put a spoonful on to a chilled saucer, then place in the fridge for 5 minutes. Turn the jam right down in the meantime. The test should have set to a jam-like consistency if you push it with your finger. If not, return to the heat, re-boil, then test again.

3 Add the butter, stir well. Cool the jam for 10 minutes to prevent the fruit sinking in the jar; ladle into sterilised jars – don't fill to the top. Cool before covering.

For more inspiration, check out our recipes on womanandhome.com.

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Jane Curran, Editor,
Feel Good Food

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The New Detox

✢ LOSE THAT TUM... ✢ FIND YOUR WAIST... ✢ GET THAT ZING BACK!

Our favourite wellbeing guru Margo Marrone, founder of The Organic Pharmacy, has created a fabulous detox for you to try. You'll love the taste of real meals, soups and smoothies – and the fantastic results you'll discover in just ten days!

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PHOTOGRAPH RICHARD JUNG

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YOUR STEP-BY-STEP 10 day DETOX PROGRAMME

So many of you have detoxed before, and while you've loved the results, weren't so keen on the regime itself. This ten-day programme is different because Margo knows that it needs to fit into our lives without making us feel too deprived. While it's longer than most, there's a reason why: "So many of the plans you come across in magazines and books include a two-day or weekend detox," says Margo. "My view on these short detoxes is that they just don't give your body enough time for the good work to start properly, meaning that your system gets confused. In order to achieve long-lasting – even remarkable – results, the programme you follow has to last between seven and ten days. Only after this longer period will your great work take root. Let it encourage you to slow down, rest, get rid of bad habits and enjoy."

WHO NEEDS TO DETOX?

Anyone who experiences some of the following symptoms will benefit from undergoing a detox programme. The more you experience, the more you need help.

✢ age spots ✢ bad breath ✢ digestive problems ✢ excess weight ✢ headaches ✢ mood swings ✢ tiredness ✢ skin disorders ✢ dull skin and hair ✢ sluggish metabolism.

Once you've completed your detox, your body will feel and look great – and people will notice. You should experience:

✢ clear, glowing skin ✢ good gut health ✢ shiny hair ✢ weight loss ✢ a more alert mind ✢ happier moods ✢ fewer signs of ageing ✢ bright eyes ✢ higher energy ✢ better sleep ✢ generally improved health.

GET ORGANISED

Before you begin your detox, fill your cupboards with the foods mentioned in the daily menu plan. Stock up on herbs, supplements (see right) and anything you will need for body treatments to support you through the detoxification process.

The first three days of the programme are the hardest, so if you work conventional hours, start your detox on a Friday morning and plan as little as possible for that day and the coming weekend. Although detox can, in the long run, be highly energising, initially it can make you feel tired and depleted. Remember – detoxification needs energy. Rest is vital – if you feel tired, sleep.

HERBS & REMEDIES...

The starting point for your detox is to cleanse and repair your gut, enabling nutrients to enter the blood more efficiently, which will improve circulation, make your skin feel firmer and reduce the appearance of age spots, pigmentation and wrinkles. A clean gut means that your energy will increase and you'll feel rejuvenated and more able to cope. Antioxidants, vitamins, fibre and essential fatty acids will enhance the process of cleansing. In addition, herbs can speed up the detox process. You'll need:

DETOX CAPSULES with psyllium to cleanse, green barley to repair cells, clay to bind impurities, liquorice to flush. Take three capsules morning and night.

HERBAL DETOX SUPPORT DROPS to support the organs through the detox. Use a mixture of equal measures of these organic herbal tinctures:

✢ milk thistle
✢ dandelion
✢ red clover
✢ artichoke
✢ turmeric
✢ berberis
✢ marsh-mallow.

Take 15 drops of the combined tinctures in a little water, three times a day, during your detox.

SUPER ANTIOXIDANTS with vitamins C and E to mop up free radicals. Take two capsules with lunch and dinner, daily.

PHYTONUTRIENTS AND MSM Look for multivitamins with spirulina, alfalfa, wheatgrass, blue green algae, blueberry and more. Take two capsules with lunch and dinner.

ESSENTIAL FATTY ACIDS (EFAs) help with cell renewal. Look for EFA supplements that also contain B-Complex vitamins, magnesium and calcium. Take two with breakfast.

WHERE TO BUY The Organic Pharmacy has everything you need, including a ten-day Detox Kit, £140, containing: Detox capsules (colon cleanse & gut repair), Liver & Kidney drops, Superantioxidant Capsules, Phytonutrients Capsules, Essential Fatty Acids + B Complex Capsules, Detox Cellulite Body Oil, a Skin Brush and instructions. To order, call 0844-8008399 or go to the website *theorganic pharmacy.com*.

EVERY DAY REMEMBER TO...

✢ **On waking, drink a glass of hot water with half a lemon squeezed into it. This helps to break down mucus in the body and alkalises your tissues.**
✢ **Take three herbal detox capsules with a full glass of water, twice a day – half an hour before a meal or one hour after a meal is the best time.**
✢ **Do ten minutes of breathing exercises, followed by some gentle stretching. If time is tight, just do five minutes each – it will make you feel great!**
✢ **Before showering, gently dry brush the skin (see page 139 for our tips).**
✢ **Shower and massage the body with oil containing rosemary and grapefruit essential oils, to boost your circulation.**

...DON'T FORGET

✢ **Avoid drinking tea and coffee regularly – try to drink different organic herbal teas instead.**
✢ **Drink at least eight glasses of filtered water a day. Invest in a good-quality jug filter for water to use in both hot drinks and for cooking, as well as drinking.**

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YOUR DETOX PLAN DAYS ONE TO FIVE

DAY ONE

Breakfast Blend ½ mango and 1 banana together with 250ml (9fl oz) low-fat plain bio yogurt.
Mid-morning snack 1 apple or 1 pear.
Lunch Chickpea and quinoa salad. Cook 200g (7oz) quinoa, according to the pack instructions, then add 100g (4oz) drained, canned chickpeas, 1 chopped carrot, 1tbsp extra virgin olive oil and 1 large handful chopped parsley leaves. You can speed things up by making this the night before and storing it in the fridge. Serves 1.
Mid-afternoon snack A handful of nuts or seeds.
Dinner Revitalising and immune-boosting soup (page 138).

DAY TWO

Breakfast 2 slices walnut bread with honey and a cup of green tea.
Mid-morning snack 2 prunes.
Lunch Celery soup with a slice of spelt bread. To make the soup, heat 1tbsp olive oil in a wok, add ½ chopped onion, 1 chopped carrot, 1 chopped celery stick and 1 leek, white part chopped. Stir-fry the vegetables until they are soft. Add 600ml (1pt) vegetable bouillon and 100g (4oz) pearl barley. Cook for 45 minutes, until the barley is soft. Add 1tbsp each chopped thyme leaves and 1tbsp chopped rosemary leaves, then serve. Serves 2.
Mid-afternoon snack A glass of Detox juice (page 138).
Dinner Nourishing carrot soup (page 136).

DAY THREE

Breakfast 2 eggs – poached, soft-boiled or scrambled.
Mid-morning snack A handful of grapes.
Lunch Chicken soup. Place 1 chopped fennel bulb, 1 sprig thyme (chopped), juice ½ lemon and 1 leek, white part chopped, in a large saucepan and pour in 700ml (1¼pt) organic chicken stock. Bring to a boil and leave to simmer for 1 hour, adding 25g (1oz) broccoli florets for the last 5 minutes. You can prepare this the night before and leave it in the fridge overnight. Serves 4.
Mid-afternoon snack A glass of Detox juice (page 138).
Dinner Cream Wörthersee spread (page 136) on 2 or 3 slices of wholegrain wheat, rye, spelt or sourdough bread.

DAY FOUR

Breakfast Small bowl of unsweetened muesli with skimmed milk.
Mid-morning snack 1 or 2 unsalted, plain rice cakes.
Lunch Watercress, avocado and alfalfa pitta. To make, mix together 25g (1oz) watercress, ½ chopped avocado and 25g (1oz) alfalfa sprouts. Whisk together 2tbsp low-fat plain bio yogurt, 1tbsp olive oil, juice ½ lemon and 1tsp smooth mustard. Season lightly with sea salt and pour over the salad mixture. Place in a wholegrain pitta and serve. Serves 1.
Mid-afternoon snack 1 pear.
Dinner Mixed vegetable quinoa (page 138).

DAY FIVE

Breakfast 1 cupful chopped fresh fruit with 250ml (9fl oz) low-fat plain bio yogurt.
Mid-morning snack A handful of cucumber and carrot sticks.
Lunch Mint and feta salad (page 136).
Mid-afternoon snack A handful of nuts or seeds.
Dinner Grilled chicken thighs. Remove the skin from 2 chicken thighs and grill under a medium-hot grill for 4 minutes each side until cooked through. Steam 2 or 3 chopped carrots and 150g (5oz) peas for 2 to 3 minutes, until tender. Sprinkle with 1tbsp chopped parsley or mint and serve either warm or cold. Serves 2.

TRY THIS

Prawn & vegetable stir-fry

SERVES 1

1tbsp coconut or olive oil
1 garlic clove, crushed
1cm (½in) piece root ginger, finely chopped
½ red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
2 spring onions, white part chopped
75g (3oz) mangetout
100g (4oz) pak choi, chopped
5 shiitake mushrooms, chopped
6 raw king prawns, peeled
squeeze lime juice
handful baby spinach leaves

Heat the oil in a wok, add the garlic, ginger and chilli, and stir-fry. Add the spring onions, mangetout, pak choi and mushrooms. Stir-fry for 5 minutes, then add the prawns. Fry for 5 minutes, until they're cooked. Stir in the lime juice and serve on the spinach.

The nicest kind of detox food – Prawn & vegetable stir-fry (day 8)

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YOUR DETOX PLAN RECIPES

Cream Wörthersee spread

SERVES 4

250g (9oz) cottage cheese
1tbsp chervil, finely chopped
4tbsp cows', sheep's or goats' milk
½ beetroot or 2 carrots, diced and cooked, or 185g (6½oz) raw spinach, cooked and chopped

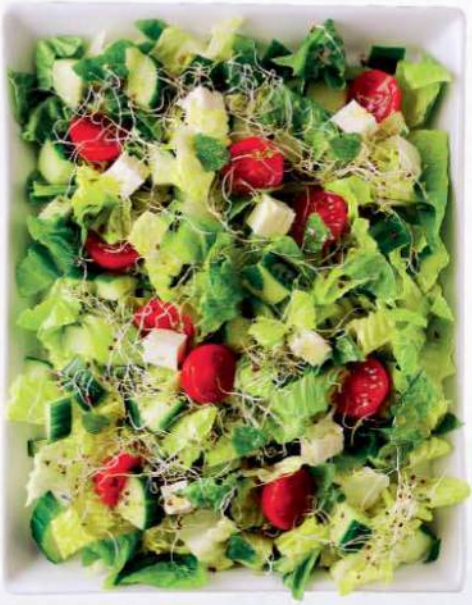
Mix together all of the ingredients with a little sea salt to make a chunky spread. If you prefer, you can substitute the cottage cheese with silken tofu, and the cows', sheep's or goats' milk with oat, rice or soy milk. Use the spread as a healthier alternative to butter or margarine – it's so tasty, you won't miss them at all!

Mint and feta salad

SERVES 2

1tbsp olive oil
1tbsp apple cider vinegar
1 head Romaine lettuce, chopped
handful alfalfa sprouts
4 sprigs mint, leaves chopped
5 cherry tomatoes, halved
½ cucumber, chopped
8 small cubes feta cheese

In a small bowl, whisk together the olive oil and vinegar. Mix together all the remaining ingredients in a large bowl, drizzle the dressing over the salad and season with sea salt. Serve either on its own or with a small portion of grilled or steamed lamb or chicken.



The most delicious carrot soup with sweet potato for extra flavour (days 2 and 9)

TRY THIS

Nourishing carrot soup

SERVES 4

100g (4oz) floury potatoes or 1 sweet potato, finely diced
150g (5oz) baby carrots, diced
1 litre (1¾pt) vegetable stock
1tbsp low-fat sour cream
1tbsp watercress or parsley, finely chopped
little grated nutmeg

Place the potatoes, carrots and stock in a large saucepan, bring to the boil and leave to simmer until soft. Pour 1tbsp of the liquid into the sour cream and stir until smooth. Pour the sour cream mixture back into the rest of the soup, add half the watercress or parsley and the nutmeg, and blend. Sprinkle the remaining herbs on top and serve.

✢ Whatever you eat, chew slowly and you'll feel fuller faster. Try it – we guarantee it works!

DAY SIX

Breakfast 5 or 6 mushrooms sautéed in olive oil and served on rye toast.
Mid-morning snack A piece of fruit of your choice.
Lunch 3 plain, unsalted rice cakes with 50g (2oz) hummus and 3 or 4 cherry tomatoes.
Mid-afternoon snack A handful of carrot and cucumber sticks.
Dinner Revitalising and immune-boosting soup (page 138) with Cream Wörthersee spread (page 136) on 2 or 3 slices of wholegrain wheat, rye, spelt or sourdough bread.

DAY SEVEN

Breakfast 2 pieces fruit of your choice, chopped, served with 2tbsp low-fat plain bio yogurt.
Mid-morning snack A piece of fruit of your choice.
Lunch Avocado pitta. Mix together ½ chopped avocado, 25g (1oz) alfalfa sprouts and 1 Little Gem or heart of Romaine lettuce (shredded). Drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice and place in a wholemeal pitta bread.
Mid-afternoon snack A handful of nuts and seeds.
Dinner Vegetable and chickpea couscous (follow the recipe for chickpea and quinoa salad from day one, substituting the quinoa with couscous).

DAY EIGHT

Breakfast Pineapple, papaya and mango smoothie. Blend 5 large chunks pineapple, ½ chopped papaya and ½ chopped mango with 250ml (9fl oz) low-fat plain bio yogurt.
Mid-morning snack One oatcake with low-fat cream cheese.
Lunch Vegetable quinoa. Place 50g (2oz) quinoa in a saucepan with 2 chopped celery sticks, 1 chopped fennel bulb, 1 leek, white part chopped, and 1 chopped carrot. Pour in 150ml (¼pt) vegetable stock and 1tbsp extra virgin olive oil, bring to the boil, cover and leave to simmer for 10 minutes until the quinoa is soft, then serve. Serves 1.
Mid-afternoon snack A piece of fruit of your choice.
Dinner Prawn & vegetable stir-fry (page 135).

DAY NINE

Breakfast Small bowl of unsweetened muesli with skimmed milk.
Mid-morning snack 1 oatcake with low-fat cream cheese.
Lunch Nourishing carrot soup (page 136).
Mid-afternoon snack A piece of fruit of your choice.
Dinner Mixed vegetable quinoa (page 138).

DAY TEN

Breakfast 2 eggs – poached, soft-boiled or scrambled.
Mid-morning snack 2 prunes.
Lunch Mint and feta salad (page 136).
Mid-afternoon snack A glass of Detox juice (page 138).
Dinner Mixed vegetable quinoa (page 138).
Congratulations – you're done! You should now feel rejuvenated and fit as a fiddle!

Eating well...

✢ Chew every mouthful thoroughly to relieve pressure on the digestive system. Don't rush your meal, eat consciously and enjoy every mouthful.
✢ Stress greatly affects digestion, so have quiet time to eat, ideally at a table. Make every mouthful small and put your knife and fork down between each one – this will help your brain to think your stomach is full, and prevent you from overeating.
✢ When you've finished, rest for five to ten minutes to let your food go down.
✢ Finally, try not to eat later than 8.30pm, so that your body gets enough time to digest your food before you go to bed – if your body is still digesting by bedtime, you will find it harder to sleep well.

Detoxing will improve your health, your skin and figure, and it can help get rid of bad eating habits

Nutritious and so delicious: avocado pittas (days 4 and 7)

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YOUR DETOX PLAN RECIPES

Revitalising and immune-boosting soup

SERVES 4

100g (4oz) brown rice or 50g (2oz) pearl barley (optional)
1 litre (1¾pt) vegetable stock
6 shiitake mushrooms, chopped
1 spring onion, white part sliced
1cm (½in) piece root ginger, finely chopped
½ red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped, or ¼tsp dried red chilli
2 sprigs thyme, leaves chopped
2 carrots, finely diced
squeeze lime or lemon juice

If using rice or barley, place in a saucepan and add the stock. Bring to a boil and simmer for 20 minutes. Add the remaining ingredients then simmer for 10 minutes. If not using them, place all ingredients in a saucepan, bring to the boil and simmer for 10 minutes. Season and serve with the lime or lemon juice.

Mixed vegetable quinoa

SERVES 2

300ml (½pt) vegetable stock
100g (4oz) quinoa
1tbsp olive oil
1 celery stick, chopped
2 spring onions, white part chopped
1 sweet potato, chopped
1 courgette, chopped
50g (2oz) broccoli florets
large handful parsley, chopped

Place the stock and quinoa in a large saucepan, bring to the boil and simmer for 7 to 8 minutes. In a heavy-bottomed pan, heat the olive oil and fry the celery, spring onions and sweet potato over a low heat for 2 to 3 minutes. Add the courgette and broccoli and fry for 3 minutes. Stir the vegetables into the quinoa mixture and simmer until all the liquid is absorbed. Sprinkle with the parsley and serve.

TRY THIS

Vitality in every glass!

DETOX JUICE

Blend the juice of ¼ beetroot, ½ lemon, 2 celery sticks and 2 carrots with a pinch of turmeric and ½tsp extra virgin olive oil.

DETOX ANTIOXIDANT SMOOTHIE

Great served as a breakfast or mid-morning snack. Put 5 blueberries, 5 strawberries, 5 goji berries (optional), 1 kiwi, juice ½ lemon or 1tbsp apple cider vinegar, plus 3tbsp water, in a blender, and whizz until smooth.

DIGESTIVE ENZYME SMOOTHIE

Enjoy after any meal, to help your digestive system in its important work. Put 2 slices pineapple, ½ papaya (cubed), 2tbsp low-fat plain bio yogurt, juice ½ lemon (optional) and 1 sprig mint in a blender, and whizz until smooth.

Brilliant juices to give your body a real boost

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Margo adds a powerful trio of therapies to cleanse the body and soothe the mind.

BREATHE

Most of us only shallow breathe, using just the upper parts of our lungs. Breathing deeply enables oxygen to circulate properly, enriching tissues with nutrients, taking waste away and inducing a state of relaxation.

Test to see if you breathe in a deep or shallow way. Stand or sit, and place one hand just below your ribcage, the other on the lower abdomen. Breathe in and feel which hand moves. If it's your upper hand, you are shallow breathing. Consciously breathe from the abdomen by taking in a deep breath so that your stomach rises and your lower hand moves, then breathe out. Do this for a few minutes until you get used to how it feels. Try to adopt deep breathing in normal life – you'll feel much more relaxed.

MASSAGE

Like exercise, massage "moves" the body, increasing circulation, improving oxygenation and helping to remove toxins from the tissues. Body brush for five minutes in the morning before you shower to boost circulation and the flow of lymph, and remove dead skin cells.

1 Apply four drops of neat rosemary essential oil to the brush – enough for the whole massage. Starting with your right leg, place the body brush on the top of your right foot. Make small, very gentle, counter-clockwise motions all over the top, bottom and underneath of the foot, before moving all the way up the front and back of your right leg. Repeat on other leg.

2 Make small, counter-clockwise circular motions all over your right hand and fingers and all the way up your arm. Stop when you reach your right shoulder, then repeat on the left.

3 On the lower left of your abdomen, make small counter-clockwise moves with the brush in a big circle around your belly button. When you reach the start move up to your chest, and brush, moving across and upward until you reach your neck. Rinse off with a warm shower.

DAILY BATH RITUAL

This is perfect for releasing stress, and can also help to overcome insomnia. Practise it every day throughout your detox and at other times whenever you feel the need.

✢ Fill the bath with comfortably warm water (not too hot) and add a few drops of a relaxing essential oil, such as lavender.

✢ Soak for 20 minutes. As you soak, close your eyes and run your mind over the day. Each time you come across an issue that bothers you, imagine your anxiety about it flowing out of you and into the water.

✢ When you are ready to get out of the bath, pull out the plug and, as the water empties, imagine all your stresses swirling away too.

✢ At the end of the day, some soothing music will help you to destress, relax and wind down

THE DETOX THAT WORKED FOR US!

Sue West from London tried the detox and loved the results. "It was really easy to follow and I found that after ten days I had lost my cravings.

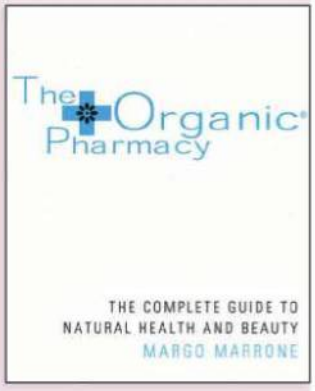
Loved best My new morning energy and nightly bath – a great way to relax.
Liked least Having to give up naughty things such as refined sugars and alcohol!
The results I have increased energy, I've had a complete brain recharge and my skin feels much better."

w&h wellbeing editor Lynn Cardy also tried the detox. "I put myself through a detox every now and then in an effort to kick-start better eating habits. If you can say a detox is lovely, then this comes close.

High spot The carrot soup – delicious!
Low spot Even the thought of giving up coffee gives me a headache.
The results I lost six and a half pounds in two weeks – mostly around my middle!"

Want to know more?

Our detox was taken from *The Organic Pharmacy: The Complete Guide To Natural Health And Beauty* by Margo Marrone (Duncan Baird, £14.99). For more detox resources and supplement advice, visit womanandhome.com. For more on Margo Marrone and The Organic Pharmacy, visit theorganicpharmacy.com.



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Autumn entertaining

There's a chill in the air and the days are getting shorter, so what better excuse to stay inside and have your friends over for dinner! Here are a few easy ideas to get you started

Be bold

Go full-out every time you have guests around. Fresh flowers are key, even on their own they always make a statement. You don't have to spend the earth: stick to seasonal flowers in a colour that suits your theme. Keep your place settings simple, light a few candles and get ready to pour the wine.

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Jewel colours

One of the key interiors trends for autumn and winter and fabulous for a dining table, as the shades positively glow by candlelight. Use accents of gold or silver to highlight the theme. Gold cutlery is so fashionable and makes for a nice change. Here different coloured and designed plates are layered up with bold napkins and bright turquoise stemware, giving the table an informal but classy feel.

✢ GET THE LOOK

Matt-gold cutlery is so hot right now, these ones are from *zarahome.com*. For stylish botanical-print china, check out *sanderson-uk.com* or *paleandinteresting.com*. And for coloured stemware, visit *habitat.co.uk*.

Mix 'n' match

Never feel that you have to match all your dinnerware. Layer classic white china on top of a red earthenware underplate, and add a blue glass bowl accompanied by a mixture of clear wine glasses and red glass tumblers. Because of the complementary colour scheme, they will all work really well together.

✢ GET THE LOOK

For coloured earthenware plates try *denby.co.uk*. The red cut-glass tumblers are from *okadirect.com*, and you will find pretty glass bowls at *ikea.com*.

Monochrome

A black-and-white theme always makes a striking setting and is so easy to pull together. Use your regular white china and clear glasses, and just invest in some smart black napkins. To soften the look, use pretty bejewelled napkin rings or make your own from inexpensive costume jewellery. Pearl-like beads will look very sophisticated and give your table an elegant feel, just wrap a string around each napkin for a super-glam look.

✢ GET THE LOOK

Inexpensive pearl-look jewellery is available from Primark *(0118-9606300)* or *claires.co.uk*. Black napkins can be found at *debenhams.com*.

> Try something new: lay your table runners across the width of the table instead of lengthways. You might want to use two or three runners for a fuller effect

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> Twigs sprayed silver or gold and put in a tall vase will make a dramatic table centrepiece. Use battery-operated fairy lights to create a twinkling atmosphere

Personal settings

Less is often more and, in this case, it's also a great talking point. Two rolls of plain paper have been used as long placemats. Instead of runners or tablecloths, this covers the table in an informal way and, when the party is over, you can simply bunch it up and throw it away. No more washing and ironing of white tablecloths! For a special touch, personalise each setting by writing your guests' names with a black marker pen.

GET THE LOOK

Use lining wallpaper for this as it comes in a long roll and is very affordable. Find a whole range to choose from at *homebase.co.uk*.

All lit up

Now that the evenings are getting longer, it's the ideal excuse to start lighting candles to get you in the mood for autumn. To make a stunning table centre, use a pretty glass bowl, either coloured or in clear glass, and fill just over halfway with sand. Use dinner candles and push them into the sand, making sure that they are stable, stand up straight and that the flames won't be anywhere near the glass.

GET THE LOOK

See *shearer-candles.com* for a fabulous selection of coloured candles. For a pretty bowl, try *lsa-international.com*.

Nature incorporated

This is the time of year when it is so easy to use items from nature as decorative accessories. Take a trip down memory lane and drill small holes in conkers. Thread with a pretty ribbon and tie around napkins for a nature-inspired napkin ring. Use the leftover conkers to dress the rest of your table – simply fill bowls with them and secure a large pillar candle in the middle of them.

GET THE LOOK

Find a great selection of pretty ribbons from *janemeans.co.uk*. For a similar tablecloth, try *okadirect.com*.

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LAY THE TABLE

SPARKLING SENSATION

For a festive-feel, set the scene with dark moody shades, candlelight and sparklers. Bright red pomegranates are used as place settings, each holding a star sparkler to make the party shine. The few red highlights, such as the cocktail glasses, sit perfectly against the black backdrop of the table, creating a dramatic look. While metallic candlesticks bring a bit of shine to the table.

✢ GET THE LOOK

Star-shaped sparklers are available from *talkingtables.co.uk*. For similar black-bordered napkins and black plates, try *houseoffraser.co.uk*.

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Our favourite online and mail order food suppliers

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01985-840562; realmeat.co.uk

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01179-773474; bartspices.com

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0871-8716611; goodnessdirect.co.uk

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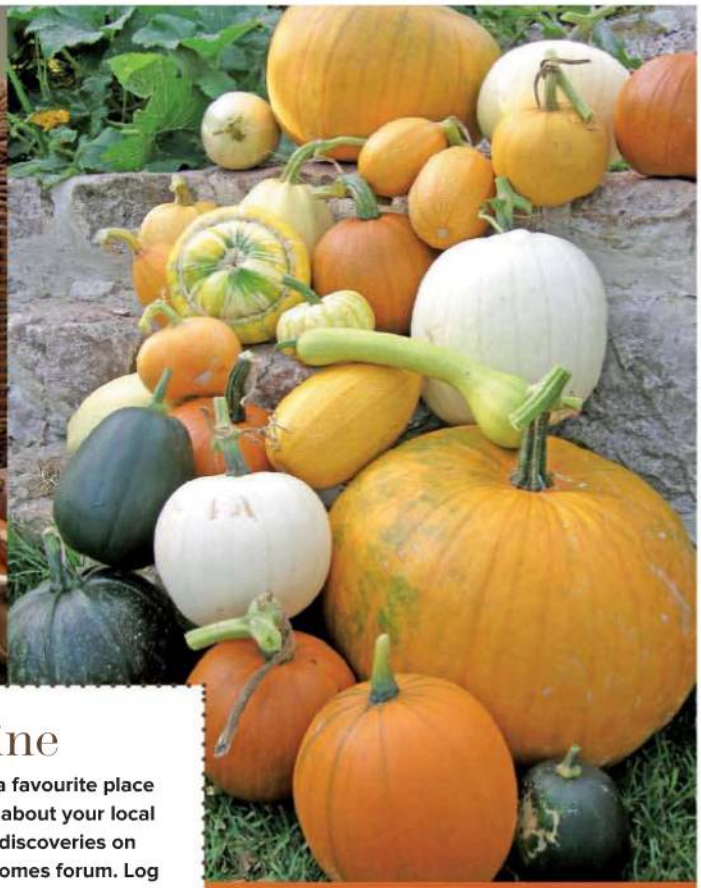

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boxscheme.org

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0116-2402888; fionacairns.com

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hotelchocolat.co.uk

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Farmers' markets

There has been an explosion in the popularity of farmers' markets in the last few years. We are all keen to get in touch with the land, find out what foods are grown locally, what's in season, and discover different varieties of fruit and vegetables. So why should we shop at a farmers' market? Because it's fun and accessible, and you have the chance to chat to the people who actually grow the food, make the cheese or rear the livestock. You'll also find varieties of fruit and vegetables not seen on the supermarket shelves.

These markets are a lovely spot for finding gifts, such as home-made preserves and local honey. And it's a great place to take your kids too – they'll learn that vegetables are grown in the soil and don't arrive pristine and pre-packed. Plus, knowing that what you're buying is home-grown and locally produced makes you feel so good about your carbon footprint.

Here are some good websites to help you find farmers' markets and pick-your-own farms in your area. It's up to all of us to support our local farmers and markets to prevent them disappearing, so get out there and get shopping!

farmersmarkets.net
pickyourown.info
farmshopping.net
foodloversbritain.com

If you've found a great farmers' market, please share it with us on womanandhome.com.

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SHOPPING DIRECTORY

The recipe list

MEAT AND POULTRY

14 Bacon and chilli pasta
23 Spicy chilli con carne
32 Creamy chicken with red pesto and olives
35 Med-style chicken
35 Cheese and bacon omelette
36 Bill Granger's Pork steaks with cashew nut salsa
44 Pot-roast chicken with tarragon sauce
47 Rösti-topped spicy cottage pie
47 Rich beef casserole with porcini and port
50 Lamb shanks with roasted vine tomatoes
53 Sausage casserole
56 Beef and bean stew
56 Fruity lamb stew
58 Antonio Carluccio's Umbrian lentil and home-made sausage stew
66 Keralan green chicken curry
69 Real Italian carbonara
70 French onion soup
70 Berber tagine
73 Super-quick chicken tikka
82 Roast quail with pomegranate, mint and parsley yogurt
82 Herb-roasted chicken with corn salsa
86 Leg of pork with sloe gin and apples
86 Roast duck made oh so easy
89 Rosemary chicken with lentil and spinach salad
90 Thyme-roasted partridges with pears
94 Balsamic-glazed rack of lamb with sweet potato gratin
99 Sweet pork fillet with rösti
100 Rachel Allen's Roast leg of lamb with garlic, rosemary and olive paste

FISH AND SHELLFISH

14 Roasted tomatoes with anchovies
20 Seared tuna with chunky avocado salsa
26 Roast Parma monkfish with mushy peas
29 Steamed cod with sweet potato mash
32 Steamed pak choi with ginger-wrapped salmon
32 Seafood, saffron and chorizo risotto
47 Healthier fish pie
66 Squid and ginger stir-fry
71 Patty pan squash and prawn curry
76 Rick Stein's Fresh spring rolls
90 Cheat's kedgeree
94 Mediterranean fish stew with rouille croutons
94 Oven-steamed halibut
135 Prawn and vegetable stir-fry

VEGETARIAN

14 Tomato tart
14 Roasted garlicky tomato soup
16 Valentine Warner's Leeks vinaigrette
20 Linguine with peas, courgettes and feta
23 Fruity stuffed peppers
26 Fast ratatouille pasta
26 Linguine with roasted aubergines, sun-dried tomatoes and pine nuts
29 Spicy red pepper, tomato and rocket pizza
44 Wild mushroom risotto
50 Feta and hummus soup
53 Hearty vegetable soup
56 Pumpkin and tomato chowder
69 Roast vegetable lasagne
74 Quesadillas with spring onions and jalapeños
74 Vegetarian chilli
82 Sweet potato and celeriac gratin
82 Roast potatoes
82 Roasted roots
82 Stir-fried greens
82 Mashed potatoes
89 Spiced roasted aubergine
92 Country bread salad
93 Pear salad
93 Roasted squash with feta
99 Oven-dried tomato and basil pasta
99 Roasted red onion and pepper potato salad
99 Three-bean tikka salad
136 Cream Wörthersee spread
136 Mint and feta salad
136 Nourishing carrot soup
138 Revitalising immune-boosting soup
138 Mixed vegetable quinoa

SOMETHING SWEET

104 Pears poached in dessert wine
104 Spiced apple pie with quince jelly
107 Raspberry tiramisu
107 Crunchy berry crumble
108 Chocolate fondants
111 Rice pudding with blackberries and plums
111 Our classic lemon tart
111 Roasted port plums
112 Jamie Oliver's Pumpkin tart
118 Sticky toffee cakes with salted caramel buttercream
118 Pear and almond cakes with vanilla frosting
118 Mini carrot cakes with lemon frosting
122 Pear and almond cake with sweetened yogurt
122 Chocolate yogurt cake with mascarpone frosting
125 Plum and apple ring cake
126 Gordon Ramsay's Wholemeal blueberry muffins
129 Blackcurrant jam

DRINKS

138 Detox juice
138 Detox antioxidant smoothie
138 Digestive enzyme smoothie

Feel Good Food is published by woman&home, IPC Southbank Publishing Company Ltd, The Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU, telephone (020) 3148 5000. Distributed by Marketforce (UK) Ltd, The Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU, telephone (020) 3148 3300. Printed by Southernprint Ltd. Reproduction by Wyndeham Pre-Press Limited, a member of the Wyndeham Press Group. Covers printed by Wyndeham Impact. Prices quoted throughout are RRP, checked at time of going to press.

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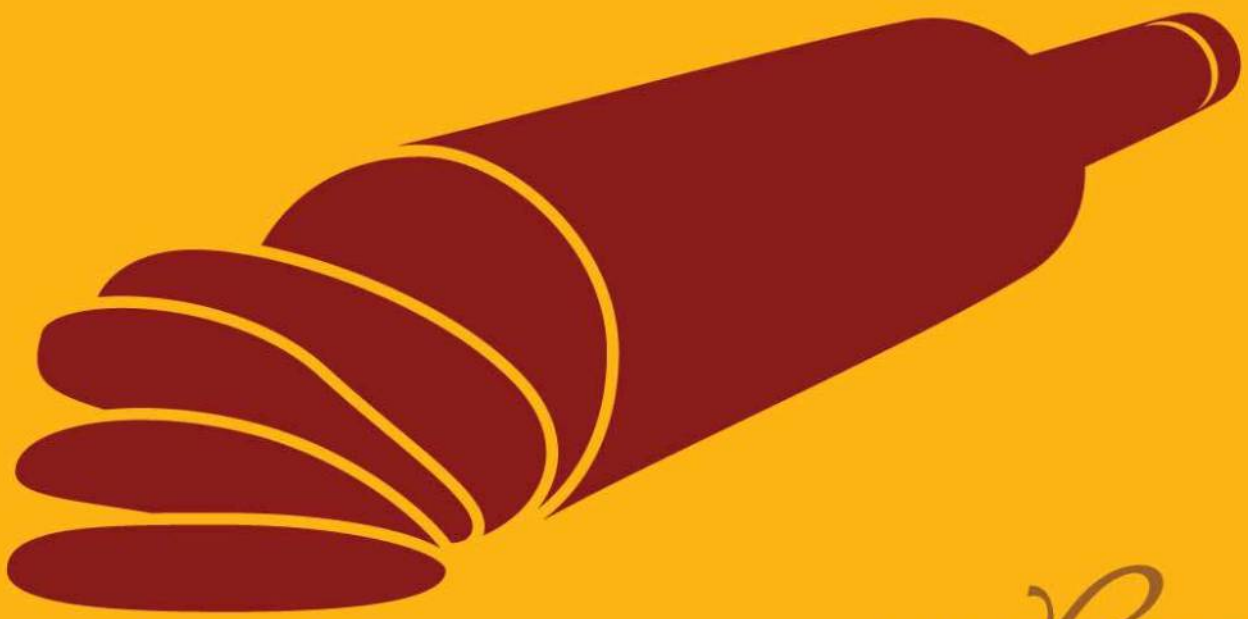

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